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THESIS

**THE PRESIDENT AND THE INTELLIGENCE
COMMUNITY: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE
RELATIONSHIP**

by

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December 2017

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**THE PRESIDENT AND THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY:
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RELATIONSHIP**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

This thesis identifies the correlation between the quality of the U.S. president's relationship with the intelligence community and intelligence failures. This research also evaluates how the relationship changes over the course of a presidency in an effort to identify factors that contribute to a working relationship strong enough to mitigate the risk of intelligence failures. Case studies are used to establish the character of the relationships between Presidents John F. Kennedy, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush and their supporting intelligence communities. These relationships are then used to analyze intelligence and operational successes and failures that occurred during their respective presidencies. This thesis determined that, in general, a good relationship with the president increases the intelligence community's chances for success, and a negative relationship increases the chance for failure. Additionally, once failure has occurred, if a president is receptive to intelligence and change, the relationship will improve. This thesis also found that the intelligence community must establish trust and communication with a receptive president to form a working relationship, and recommends that a newly elected president carefully appoint a trusted, non-political Director of National Intelligence upon taking office.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIG	Central Intelligence Group
DCI	Director of Central Intelligence
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DNI	Director of National Intelligence
DOD	Department of Defense
ExComm	Executive Committee of the National Security Council
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
IC	Intelligence Community
IG	Inspector General
NGA	National Geospatial-intelligence Agency
NID	National Intelligence Daily
NIE	National Intelligence Estimate
NSA	National Security Agency
NSC	National Security Council
NSS	National Security Strategy
OAS	Organization of American States
ODNI	Office of the Director of National Intelligence
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
PDB	President's Daily Brief
PDF	Panamanian Defense Forces
PICL	President's Intelligence Checklist
SECDEF	Secretary of Defense
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
CJCS	Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
SOUTHCOM	U.S. Southern Command
UN	United Nations
U.S.	United States
WMD	Weapon of Mass Destruction

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I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A. STUDY INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTION

When a newly-elected president takes office in the United States, he assumes command of the world's most powerful military as well as the world's largest national Intelligence Community (IC) with the most widespread collection capabilities.¹ Furthermore, he inherits responsibility for the intelligence community's current and planned operations. The president's choice to further employ the instruments of national power, to include the military, is often based on the information he receives from the IC. As is discussed in depth in the literature review, the IC's dissemination of faulty information, inability to communicate critical information, or failure to collect requisite information can lead the president to make suboptimal choices. Less studied, however, is the importance of the relationship between the president and the IC, the ways in which that relationship affects operational outcomes, and how that relationship evolves based on those outcomes. Therefore, this thesis seeks to answer the following questions: Does the relationship between the president and IC affect the chance of an intelligence failure occurring? What impact does a failure or success have on the relationship between the president and IC?

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

From the Japanese surprise attack at Pearl Harbor in 1941 to the rise of the Islamic State in 2013, intelligence failures continue to occur, leaving political and military leaders surprised and reactive, instead of proactively deescalating or countering potential crises. A president's relationship with the Intelligence Community can significantly impact the employment of the military and its chances for success or failure. Furthermore, as the president's term continues, the relationship is subject to change based on the performance of the IC or personalities therein. Failed operations can be costly, not

¹ Alan Breakspear, "A New Definition of Intelligence," *Intelligence and National Security* 28, no. 5 (2013): 684, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684527.2012.699285>.

only in terms of the actual financial expense to conduct the operation, but also in terms of lost lives, equipment, and political capital. As a result, mitigating intelligence failures is essential in reducing unnecessary resource expenditures and political embarrassment. Analyzing past presidents' relationships with the IC can provide insight into how the IC can best support the president to decrease failures and the costs and embarrassments associated with those failures.

C. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This thesis asks the following: as the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) or Director of National Intelligence (DNI) is the representative of the Intelligence Community, is the relationship between the DCI/DNI and U.S. president representative of the president's relationship with the IC as a whole?² Then, through case study analysis, asks does a positive working relationship between the president and IC decrease the likelihood of intelligence failures, whereas a negative relationship between the president and IC lend itself to failures. The thesis will concurrently analyze how those successes or failures subsequently improve or diminish the relationship. In doing so, this thesis seeks to identify commonly occurring factors that contribute to a positive relationship, which will, in turn, serve to mitigate future intelligence failures. Because this thesis focuses on the DCI/DNI, it will only address U.S. intelligence failures or successes.

While U.S. history is replete in examples of operations and intelligence successes and failures, due to limited time and resources, this study only conducts a brief examination of the George W. Bush presidency and an in-depth examination of four successes or failures: The Bay of Pigs, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Operation Just Cause, Operations Desert Shield/Storm. The cases selected for in-depth analysis were chosen for several reasons. First, cases were selected based upon the availability of information. A high volume of declassified information regarding the president and the individual events

² The evolution of the DCI into the DNI as well as the differences in the positions will be explained in depth in Chapter II; however, the key similarity between the positions that this thesis focuses on is the fact that the position is recognized as the principal intelligence adviser to the president. The DCI was mandated as such by the National Security Act of 1947. Following the terrorist attacks in 2001, the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, the position of DCI was dissolved, and the DNI was created as the principal intelligence adviser.

evaluated needed to exist for this research to accurately determine the quality of the relationships that existed between the president and IC. The Bay of Pigs and Cuban Missile Crisis both occurred during John F. Kennedy's presidency, which is well documented and largely declassified. This allows it to serve as a basis for understanding the significance of relationships. Although George H. W. Bush's presidency is not as heavily documented, enough information exists regarding his time as DCI, Vice president, and president to determine the relationship he enjoyed with the IC. Information regarding Operations Just Cause, Desert Shield, and Desert Storm was plentiful enough to evaluate the impacts of that relationship on those successes. Second, cases were selected to test the various aspects of the thesis questions.

Although research conducted indicated enough information available to study a variety of presidents, the Kennedy and Bush presidencies offered the best chances for comparison based on early similarities excluding their relationship with the IC. Both presidents inherited a covert action mission to remove a world leader from power, but the presidents had strikingly different relationships with the IC and different results when the operations were executed. Kennedy's early relationship with IC was less than optimal. Studying the early relationship, its impacts on the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion,³ and the resulting changes examines the effects of a poor relationship. The IC's contribution in the successful resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis begins to underscore the importance of a good relationship. George H. W. Bush exemplified a strong presidential relationship with the IC. Studying Operation Just Cause and Operations Desert Shield/Storm will provide further insight into whether the good relationship Bush enjoyed with the IC impacted success and how the relationship was impacted by success. Finally, because George H. W. Bush and Kennedy case studies supported the importance of a good relationship between the IC and president, the George W. Bush presidency is briefly evaluated because it should fit the model, but, instead had the opposite outcome when compared to the other findings. Like his father, President George W. Bush enjoyed

³ Although the relationship is not the only factor that contributed to the failed invasion of the Bay of Pigs, this thesis will only examine the impact the relationship.

a good working relationship with the IC; however, his presidency witnessed far more failures than his father's, so evaluating these cases will illuminate key differences.

D. LITERATURE REVIEW

In his first message as Secretary of Defense, James Mattis emphasized the importance of the IC in national security when he stated that, "together with the Intelligence Community we [Department of Defense] are the sentinels and guardians of our nation."⁴ Ideally, the U.S. intelligence apparatus would be well prepared to detect and quickly report impending attacks or threats to U.S. interests at home and abroad so leaders can counter, deter, or deescalate these situations. However, this is not always possible for a multitude of reasons, to include resources, experience, and individual rights to privacy. As a result, stated simply: intelligence failures occur. In fact, as pointed out by Professor and CIA editor, John Hedley, "allegations of intelligence failure are a 'given,' if for no other reason than the fact that politicians and public servants abhor being caught off guard."⁵ Just because intelligence failures are common does not mean that efforts should not be undertaken to address common causes, thus minimizing future failures.

To establish relevancy, answer thesis questions, and prevent duplicative efforts, research for this thesis was conducted in the following fields: theories of intelligence failure, history and evolution of the Intelligence Community, and presidential histories. Literature concerning theories of intelligence failures was reviewed to determine if a link between intelligence failures and relationships had previously been established. The literature regarding failures was found to primarily focus on the cause of a single event and propose a theory based on that event; however, the significance of relationships and their impact on success or failures was largely absent from the single event studies, and left unaddressed in most theories. Literature regarding the history and evolution of the IC was reviewed to determine if, in evaluating the history of the IC, any academic writings

⁴ James Mattis, *Message to the Department of Defense from Secretary of Defense James Mattis*, release no: NR-020-17, January 20, 2017.

⁵ John Hollister Hedley, "Learning from Intelligence Failures," *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 18, no.3 (2005): 436, 10.1080/08850600590945416.

had focused on the relationship between the IC and senior policymakers. This research illuminated the statutory formal requirements for the IC in supporting senior lawmakers, but these do not address the significance of a strong working relationship. The literature regarding presidencies tends to focus on the president's actions and reactions during specific crises or review a specific tradition or document as it evolved across presidencies. In evaluating the literature, few writings exist that establish a connection between the president's relationship with the IC and the likelihood that a failure will occur. More importantly, the writings that do evaluate the relationship tend to focus on to how best provide information to the president to prevent future failures without identifying what contributes to a good or bad relationship.

1. Intelligence Failure Theories

From renowned military historian Roberta Wohlstetter's 1962 analysis of Pearl Harbor to Dr. Ephraim Kam's article on the Islamic State's surprising rise, a plethora of literature exists highlighting how and why faulty intelligence has resulted in vulnerability to attack, failed military operations, and threats to United States' interests abroad.⁶ As noted by Professor Erik Dahl, however, the majority of the writing about intelligence failures agrees that the primary cause of failure is the failure of analysts to understand the signals and warnings available.⁷ As a result, the most widely accepted explanation for the cause of intelligence failures is the "signals to noise ratio" argument Wohlstetter presented in *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision*. This argument has then been applied to other writings that focus on a single event regarded as an intelligence failure. Other writings on intelligence failure focus predominantly on inadequacies in the system—be they the structural organization or methods of producing intelligence—or failure on the part of policymakers to receive or act on the information.

⁶ Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962); Ephraim Kam, "The Islamic State Surprise: The Intelligence Perspective," *Strategic Assessment* 18, no. 3 (October 2015).

⁷ Erik J. Dahl, *Intelligence and Surprise Attack: Failure and Success from Pearl Harbor to 9/11 and Beyond* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013), 7.

Literature about specific events of intelligence failure often seeks to discover and possibly address problems that allowed the event to occur. This category includes authors such as Wohlstetter, Professor Robert Jervis, and Kam. It also includes reports such as the 9/11 Commission Report or investigations of the Pearl Harbor attack.

Wohlstetter offers the most widely accepted theory of intelligence failure, but she derives it from and applies it only to the 1941 surprise attack at Pearl Harbor. In her *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision*, Wohlstetter conducts a thorough review of all “signals” and “noise”⁸ leading up to the Japanese attack of Pearl Harbor to determine how and why the IC failed to predict the attack. In doing so, she concludes that deciphering the relevant signals from the noise was much easier to accomplish in retrospect than in real time.⁹ While developing her theory, however, Wohlstetter did not examine the impact that the IC’s relationship with President Roosevelt had on the failure because centralized, strategic level, intelligence reporting to the president did not exist until President Truman’s directives that culminated in the National Security Act of 1947.¹⁰

Although Jervis discusses the ties between policy and the IC in “Reports, Politics, and Intelligence Failures: The Case of Iraq,” as the title implies, the report actually focuses on the causes for the intelligence failure regarding WMDs in Iraq. The report touches on politics, but focuses neither on the relationship between the IC and the president, nor the impact of that relationship. He broadly acknowledges the importance of a relationship in his review of reports regarding pre-war assessments to invade Iraq, but did not investigate the relationship or its effects.¹¹ He concludes that, although faulty

⁸ For the purpose of her analysis, Wohlstetter defines signal as “a clue or a sign or a piece of evidence that tells about a particular danger or a particular enemy move or intention,” and noise as competing or contradictory signals or “all sorts of information useless for anticipating this particular disaster.” Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor*, 2–3.

⁹ Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor*, 387.

¹⁰ While the U.S. has engaged in intelligence collection operations since the American War for Independence, the National Security Act of 1947 was the document consolidating and centralizing intelligence reporting to the President.

¹¹ Robert Jervis, “Reports, Politics, and Intelligence Failures: The Case of Iraq,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, no. 1 (August 2006): 3–52, 10.1080/01402390600566282.

intelligence assessments and reports were made, it is unclear “whether the intelligence directly affected Bush and Blair” in their decision to go to war.¹²

Failure theorists evaluating the inadequacies of processes and procedures or organization of the Intelligence Community often expose flaws, but rarely offer realistically testable solutions. Several authors, including 35-year intelligence veteran and professor, Arthur Hulnick, and Regent Professor Loch Johnson, identify flaws in the foundational aspects of intelligence like the intelligence cycle. The intelligence cycle is the process in which collection requirements are fulfilled and is broken down into the following five phases: Planning and Direction; Collection; Processing and Exploiting; Analysis and Production; and Dissemination and Integration, with evaluation and feedback occurring through each phase.¹³ Johnson and Hulnick argue that intelligence failures are inevitable because the process incorrectly assumes that the steps will be conducted sequentially, and that policy makers direct collections and use the information to guide decisions.¹⁴ Professor Alan Breakspear, however, contends that Hulnick’s argument cannot be accurately evaluated because intelligence cannot be understood by or useful to leaders without a clear, consistent definition of intelligence, proposing the following:

Intelligence is a corporate capability to forecast change in time to do something about it. The capability involves foresight and insight, and is intended to identify impending change, which may be positive, representing opportunity, or negative, representing threat.¹⁵

While Hulnick, Breakspear, and Johnson make valid arguments, they fail to propose a testable solution. Redefining intelligence will surely improve communication

¹² Jervis, “Reports, Politics, and Intelligence Failures,” 8.

¹³ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Intelligence*, Joint Publication 2-0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joints of Staff, October 22, 2013), I-6.

¹⁴ Arthur S. Hulnick, “What’s wrong with the Intelligence Cycle,” *Intelligence and National Security* 21, no. 6 (2006): 959–979, 10.1080/02684520601046291; Loch K. Johnson, (1986) “Making the Intelligence “Cycle” Work,” *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 1, no. 4 (1986): 1–23, 10.1080/08850608608435033.

¹⁵ Alan Breakspear, “New Definition of Intelligence,” *Intelligence and National Security* 28, no.5 (2013): 692, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02684527.2012.699285>.

because policy makers and analysts will be speaking the same language, but Breakspear fails to explain how the improved communication will prevent intelligence failures. Johnson discusses the intelligence cycle, and identifies CIA successes, but fails to explain how the intelligence cycle contributed to the successes. He also makes the important note that, “without an audience to listen ... the importance of an analysts’ intelligence becomes irrelevant.”¹⁶ Hulnick disagrees with the principle of the intelligence cycle. He identifies its flaws and how those flaws contributed to the failure to predict the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and how the flaws perpetuated the belief that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. After exposing the flaws, he proposes an alternative idea of “operating in parallel,” but does not explain how “operating in parallel” could be implemented and tested to prevent future failures.¹⁷

Intelligence failure theories predominantly argue that intelligence failures occur because policymakers fail to listen to or act on accurate recommendations. In analyzing intelligence failures, Political Scientist and Professor of War and Peace Studies Richard Betts concludes that intelligence failures are inevitable because weak nations have deficient capabilities, leading to failures. On the other hand, strong nations, such as the United States, will suffer intelligence failures because mistakes will occasionally be made in analysis, but more often by decision makers for whom the intelligence is produced.¹⁸ U.S. naval intelligence veteran and professor Erik Dahl also addressed the failure of policymakers, identifying receptivity to intelligence as a primary driver of failures. In establishing his “Theory of Preventative Action,” Dahl investigates conditions necessary for policymakers to be receptive to intelligence and concludes that a policymaker is receptive toward warning when and will react if the policymaker believes the threat is real and trusts the intelligence reporting.¹⁹ While both authors allude to faulty communication between the IC and policymakers as a contributing factor to intelligence

¹⁶ Johnson, “Making the Intelligence Cycle Work,” 20.

¹⁷ Hulnick, “Intelligence Cycle,” 961.

¹⁸ Richard K. Betts, “Analysis, War, and Decision: Why Intelligence Failures are Inevitable,” *World Politics* 31, no. 1 (Oct 1978): 61.

¹⁹ Dahl, *Intelligence and Surprise Attack*, 178.

failures, the authors do not explore how communication is affected by or affects the policymaker's relationship with the IC. Furthermore, neither author addresses how communication changes following an intelligence failure.

The literature regarding theories of failure does not address or investigate the significance of the relationship between the policymakers and IC or how it might impact the frequency of failures. Betts began to explore the subject acknowledging that the most frequent breakdowns in intelligence occur in communicating intelligence to policymakers in a manner that impresses them to act.²⁰ While this thesis identified communication as a key component to a strong relationship, Betts did not establish or pursue that link. Dahl identified belief in a threat and trust in intelligence as factors affecting policymakers' receptivity to intelligence, but also did not pursue the significance of the relationship between the IC and policymakers.²¹ In fact, Dahl went a step beyond, to suggest further research on the impact a failure or success has on a policymaker's receptivity to intelligence, which this thesis aims to address.²²

2. Intelligence Community Evolution

Literature regarding the evolution of the Intelligence Community focuses predominantly on legislation establishing and modifying the modern Intelligence Community since its inception following World War II. The literature was reviewed in an effort to determine the legally mandated relationship between the president and the IC. Instead, it revealed that the president is under no legal obligation to receive intelligence briefings or reports, but that he has the obligation and authority to appoint the DCI/DNI to serve as the principal intelligence adviser and lead the IC.²³

The DCI/DNI also serves as the Intelligence Community's representative to the president. Based on those premises, the DCI/DNI's relationship with the president

²⁰ Betts, "Analysis, War, and Decision," 63.

²¹ Dahl, *Intelligence and Surprise Attack*, 178.

²² Dahl, *Intelligence and Surprise Attack*, 179.

²³ National Security Act of 1947, 50 U.S.C. § 403(a)(1), (1947).

equates to the president's relationship with the community as a whole. That does not mean, however, that all members of the IC agree with everything their representative says, similar to a constituent disagreeing with a stance her congressional representative took on a subject.

Professor and literary critic, Michael Warner and CIA Chief Historian, J. Kenneth McDonald's, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies Since 1947," served as a starting point for research into the legal framework of the IC. The report traced the beginning of the IC to April 1945, when President Truman launched an initiative to form a centralized intelligence system to prevent another Pearl Harbor.²⁴ This led to the passage of the National Security Act of 1947.²⁵ The National Security Act of 1947 established the framework upon which the IC is currently built by legally mandating the following: the formation of the CIA, headed by the DCI, subservient to the National Security Council (NSC); the DCI is appointed by the president and confirmed by Senate; and the DCI is responsible for coordinating and reporting intelligence affecting national security to the NSC.²⁶ Although it established the DCI as the head of the IC and established that he reports to the NSC (which is headed by the president), the National Security Act of 1947 did not mandate guidelines for how or when the DCI should report to the president. It also failed to provide guidance to the president and NSC on how to employ or empower the DCI. Because it did not dictate methods of communication or frequency of contact, the National Security Act of 1947 failed to legally cultivate a relationship—positive or negative—between the president and the IC, leaving the discussion about the necessity and effectiveness of the relationship open for research.

Warner and McDonald traced the next major reforms to the Dulles Report in 1949, followed by the Schlesinger Report in 1971, the Pike and Church committee reports in the 1970s, and finally, the 9/11 Commission Report, which resulted in the

²⁴ Michael Warner and J. Kenneth McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies Since 1947," *Strategic Management Issues Office* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, April 2005): 3.

²⁵ Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 3.

²⁶ National Security Act of 1947.

Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004.²⁷ While each reforms will be discussed in detail in Chapter II, none of the pieces of legislation or reforms established a legal requirement or method of communication between the president and IC.

3. History of Presidencies

Because the link between presidential relationships with the Intelligence Community and its impact on failure has not yet been evaluated, much of the research conducted for this thesis examined presidential histories. The preponderance of literature on presidents comes in the form of memoirs or biographies. In addition, literature regarding presidential intelligence briefings and products were reviewed to derive each president's relationship with the IC, and how that relationship changed over the course of presidencies.

Memoirs and biographies provide a great deal of information regarding the formation of relationships or detailing events in order to explain how a president arrived at a foreign policy decision. However, the literature reviewed lacked much analysis on the relationship between the president and DCI or how that relationship impacted decision-making. For example, Senator Robert F. Kennedy's *Thirteen Days* chronicled President Kennedy's actions and reactions throughout the Cuban Missile Crisis, but does not discuss Kennedy's relationship with DCI John A. McCone.²⁸ Special Assistant to the President (Kennedy) Arthur Schlesinger's, *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* does a better job of explaining how Kennedy formed relationships as well as events that occurred during Kennedy's presidency, but does not discuss how relationships changed and the impact of the change.

Further literature regarding products and presidential histories came from Historian David Priess in his book, *The President's Book of Secrets*, and CIA Inspector General John Helgeson's *Getting to Know the President: Intelligence Briefings of*

²⁷ Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," iii–iv.

²⁸ Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 2011).

Presidential Candidates, 1952–2004.²⁹ Although these books focused on the development of the PDB and the way in which elected presidents were briefed prior to assuming office, respectively, they also provided a great deal of insight into relationships established between the president and IC. They did not, however, address the importance of the relationship, how that relationship impacted the president's success or failure, or the ICs' success or failure in supporting the president.

Overall, although an abundance of literature exists regarding intelligence failures, none of that literature specifically examines the significance or impact of the president's relationship with the Intelligence Community has on the frequency of intelligence failures.

E. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Before analyzing the relationship between the president and the Intelligence Community and its impact on success or failure, standards for measuring the relationship must be established. This is accomplished in Chapter II by establishing that the relationship between the president and the Director of Current Intelligence or Director of National Intelligence is the same as the president's relationship with the IC because the DCI/DNI is the principal intelligence adviser to the president and leader of the IC. Chapter II also elaborates on methods of communication between the president and IC and establish the significance of the PDB, and its precursor, the president's Intelligence Checklist (PICL), as a standard for measuring the receptivity of the president to the IC.

Chapter III then applies the standards described in Chapter II to President Kennedy to prove his relationship with the Intelligence Community contributed to the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Reforms following that failure led to an improvement in the relationship, which facilitated the successful resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Chapter III also illuminates factors necessary for the president to have a good relationship

²⁹ David Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets* (New York: Public Affairs, 2016); John L. Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President: Intelligence Briefings of Presidential Candidates, 1952–2004*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012).

with the IC and illustrate how a relationship can change over the course of the presidency.

While President Kennedy's early relationship with the Intelligence Community was not optimal, resulting in an initial failure, Chapter IV examines the impacts of early success on an already excellent relationship by evaluating President George H. W. Bush's presidency. Chapter IV first establishes why President George H. W. Bush's relationship with the IC should be characterized as a good relationship. Chapter IV then identifies IC successes witnessed during his presidency, and concludes by analyzing how the working relationship between the president and IC impacted the chance of success and how the relationship was impacted by success.

Chapter V will present a conclusion to the research questions and findings. This chapter also briefly addresses George W. Bush's presidency, because it appears to serve as a counterargument, summarizes the findings of the thesis, identifies significant factors impacting relationships between presidents and the IC, makes recommendations that would result in a positive working relationship, and identifies areas for future research.

F. CONCLUSION

This study was undertaken to examine the impact a president's relationship with the IC has on intelligence success or failure by asking following: Does a strong, working relationship between the president and the Intelligence Community, defined by clearly identified mechanisms for providing intelligence support to a receptive president who then provides feedback on the information he received,³⁰ minimize intelligence failures occurring over the course of the presidency? Additionally, it serves to determine if a weak or negative working relationship between the president and IC will result in a substantial intelligence failure. Furthermore, if a presidency witnesses an intelligence failure, will he make changes to strengthen his relationship with the IC that will mitigate future failures during his presidency?

³⁰ Mechanisms for relaying information to the president are identified and defined in Chapter 2. For awareness, this includes daily products, assuming the president reads and provides feedback on the document, or regular face-to-face briefings to a receptive president.

The findings from this study may determine whether a relationship does lead to success while failures are more likely to occur when a poor relationship exists. It also notes that a president with a poor relationship can make changes to improve the relationship which can lead to success. President Kennedy's case demonstrated a counterproductive initial relationship; however, after failure and reforms in personnel and products, President Kennedy established a method for effective communication with the IC that led to successful operations for the remainder of his presidency. George H.W. Bush's presidency also supported the correlation between a strong working relationship and operational success because his presidency witnessed success in Operation Just Cause and Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The caveat to the findings occurs under President George W. Bush. This thesis, however, does not contend that a fruitful relationship between the president and the IC will guarantee success for the duration of the presidency or a poor relationship spell failure for operations conducted in the absence of a communicative relationship. Instead, it argues that communication is essential in a good relationship and in ensuring the president and his staff are receiving required support from the IC that will enable the president to make better informed decisions with a higher likelihood of success, as reflected in the cases examined. It also demonstrates the significance of the DCI's political aspirations and highlights the importance of a president's receptivity to change and information.

II. THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

A. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the President of the United States and the Intelligence Community and its impacts on the success or failure throughout a Presidency is the focus of this thesis. Whereas responsibilities and office staff of the president have remained relatively constant over the course of this study, the intelligence community has not. As a result, understanding the purpose, history, membership, and structure of the intelligence community is necessary for establishing how to measure its relationship with the president, although these topics are not focus of the thesis. As a result, this chapter will provide only a general, wave-top analysis of the post-World War II intelligence community while acknowledging a longer, deeper, more nuanced history exists. This chapter will also address the mechanisms through which the president provides feedback and guidance to the intelligence community about the support he needs. Finally, in addressing the needs of the president, this chapter will establish that the relationship between the president and the DCI, or DNI depending on the presidency being examined, equates directly to the president's relationship with the IC as a whole.

B. INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY CREATION AND REFORMS

Understanding the history and make-up of the modern American Intelligence Community is essential in understanding why the president's relationship with the DCI, and now the DNI, can be equated to the Intelligence Community as a whole. Although the DNI has fewer responsibilities than the DCI did, the two positions shared two key similarities that this thesis will focus on: first, both positions were given the responsibility of collaborating, coordinating, and generally overseeing the entirety of the IC. Second, both positions serve(d) as the principal intelligence adviser to the president. In that respect, this chapter will illustrate how the DCI/DNI position was formed specifically to collaborate and coordinate the independent members of the intelligence community. With that responsibility, the DCI/DNI serves as a representative for the IC. The DNI/DCI is also responsible for ensuring executive receives relevant, timely intelligence to make

informed policy decision. As a result, the DCI/DNI serves as the IC's representative to the president. Per the representative relationship between the DCI/DNI and IC, and the advisory responsibility the DCI/DNI has to the president, the deduction that the relationship between the president and DCI/DNI equates to the relationship the president had with the IC as a whole can be made. As weaknesses in the community and position were identified, reports and proposals have led to the issuing of executive orders and passing of legislation that has strengthened the DCI/DNI and community as a whole. As the reforms occurred and legislation was passed, the DCI/DNI's role as the IC's representative to the president was only strengthened because the reforms focused on centralizing the power over the IC with the DCI/DNI. Since World War II, the intelligence community was created and has undergone four major reforms—each following a significant event or failure.

1. Creation of the Modern Intelligence Community and DCI

Following World War II, the United States was globally acknowledged as a super power, but it faced an ideological adversary—the Soviet Union. As a result, President Harry Truman recognized the need for a formalized method of collating intelligence reports and coordinating intelligence resources to ensure he and other policymakers were as informed as possible about world events.³¹ At the conclusion of the war, more than forty agencies were collecting, producing, or disseminating intelligence. Intelligence professionals across the agencies recognized that the prewar intelligence system was broken, which allowed for the Pearl Harbor surprise attack.³² Furthermore, professionals realized the wartime system was chaotic, and the postwar system needed to be better than both the prewar system and wartime system.³³ As a result, President Truman instructed the State Department to take the lead on forming the postwar intelligence office, much to the dismay of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and the FBI, and State Department Special

³¹ Thomas F. Troy, "Truman on CIA," Central Intelligence Agency, last modified August 10, 2011, https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol20no1/html/v20i1a02p_0001.htm#top.

³² Troy, "Truman on CIA."

³³ Troy, "Truman on CIA."

Assistant for Research and Intelligence Alfred McCormack was given the job of creating the proposal.³⁴ McCormack faced resistance from within the State Department, resulting in first having to secure his own position and office in the state intelligence apparatus before he could begin the undertaking of unifying intelligence efforts.³⁵ Because he was not well informed on the community, he eventually agreed with a Budget Bureau study of intelligence and suggested the creation of a complex interdepartmental system dominated by State provided intelligence.³⁶ Meanwhile, the War Department was preparing its own far simpler plan.³⁷

Special Assistant McCormack's plan was heavily criticized. One critique came from Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence (later the first appointed DCI) Admiral Sidney Souers who pointed out that McCormack's plan gave the State Department too much control over intelligence.³⁸ Furthermore, McCormack's plan excluded the military advisers from impacting the president's decisions although military advisers were more likely to provide unbiased intelligence.³⁹ Souers went on to recommend the far simpler JCS plan.⁴⁰ Truman agreed with Souers and pushed the JCS plan forward in January 1946, after revisions.⁴¹ Although the revisions appeared to be minor, they significantly degraded the power of the newly created Central Intelligence Group (CIG) by making it dependent on other departments for funds, personnel, and facilities. Nonetheless, President Truman appointed Admiral Souers as the first DCI with the mission to "accomplish the correlation and evaluation of intelligence relating to the national security

³⁴ Troy, "Truman on CIA."

³⁵ Troy, "Truman on CIA."

³⁶ Troy, "Truman on CIA."

³⁷ Troy, "Truman on CIA."

³⁸ Sydney Souers, "Memorandum from the Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence (Souers) to Clark M. Clifford," (official memorandum, Washington, DC: U.S. Navy, December 27, 1945), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945-50Intel/d64>.

³⁹ Souers, "Memorandum from the Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence (Souers) to Clark M. Clifford."

⁴⁰ Troy, "Truman on CIA."

⁴¹ Troy, "Truman on CIA."

and appropriate dissemination within the Government and the resulting strategic and national policy intelligence.”⁴²

President Truman supported the JCS plan for the creation of a Central Intelligence Group (CIG) and DCI, after a lengthy, thoroughly debated process. According to the plan, the DCI would be responsible for overseeing the intelligence community and providing intelligence to the president. Most importantly, as Souers pointed out, “the President would appoint the Director, making it possible to procure a man of outstanding ability and integrity,” which supports the implication that the DCI should be able to establish rapport and trust to build a good relationship with the president.⁴³

The Central Intelligence Group was doomed from its creation because it was reliant on resources for the War Department, Department of State, and Department of the Navy, but that did not stop DCI Souers from working to expand and empower the organization. Following World War II, clandestine operations still needed a parent organization following the dissolution of the OSS. The creation of the CIG offered the disenfranchised officers of the OSS, now nested in the War Department, a better option for employment.⁴⁴ As a result, the clandestine service officers lobbied for, and succeeded in, being transferred to the CIG, giving DCI Souers command of the majority of U.S. clandestine operations.⁴⁵ DCI’s gaining control of clandestine operations has since only expanded and, as this study will later demonstrate, been a source of distrust between the president and IC. Furthermore, it has served to grant the IC a platform from which it can push a political agenda, which has resulted in a fractured relationship between the president and IC at times. The fractured relationship has contributed to operational and intelligence failures.

⁴² As quoted from Warner and McDonald, “U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies,” 4.

⁴³ Souers, “Memorandum from the Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence (Souers) to Clark M. Clifford.”

⁴⁴ Warner and McDonald, “U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies,” 5.

⁴⁵ Warner and McDonald, “U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies,” 5.

The Central Intelligence Group was transformed into the Central Intelligence Agency and duly empowered when Congress passed the National Security Act of 1947, providing statutory support and permanency to President Truman's initiatives. According to the act, the CIA, under the presidentially appointed DCI, is responsible for coordinating United States' intelligence activities and briefing intelligence reporting to the NSC.⁴⁶ President Truman's initiatives and the National Security Act of 1947 began the creation of the modern intelligence community. More importantly, the act created the DCI to oversee the community and correlate and consolidate the information generated. Finally, the act established the DCI's reporting senior as the chairman of the National Security Council, a position held by the president. The National Security Act of 1947 also laid the framework to establish the DCI as the intelligence community so his relationship with the president is representative of the IC's relationship with the president.

2. Dulles's Report and DCI Smith's Changes Empowering the DCI

Only a year after the creation of the CIA, NSC officials and the DCI asked Allen Dulles, William Jackson, and Matthias Correa to conduct a review of the CIA with the intent of determining how the NSC should oversee the agency.⁴⁷ The result was the 1949 Dulles Report. The Dulles Report concluded that the National Security Act of 1947 provided necessary framework for the intelligence system to be built upon and argued that the CIA "should be empowered and encouraged to establish, through its Director, a closer liaison with the two members of the National Security Council on whom it chiefly depends and who should be the main recipients of its products—the Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense."⁴⁸ The Dulles Report also found that the CIA was failing to execute its responsibility of coordinating intelligence activities relating to national security.⁴⁹ The Dulles Report concluded that the CIA was formed in an effort to reduce

⁴⁶ National Security Act of 1947.

⁴⁷ Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 8.

⁴⁸ Allen Dulles, William Jackson, and Mathias F. Correa, "The Central Intelligence Agency and National Organization for Intelligence: A Report to the National Security Council" (January 30, 1949), 1.

⁴⁹ Dulles, Jackson and Correa, "The Central Intelligence Agency and National Organization for Intelligence," 2–4.

the duplication of efforts across the IC, identify and remedy gaps in collections, and, instead of producing finished intelligence based on organic collections, it was to consolidate the information from other agencies to produce the most accurate assessments addressing national intelligence problems; in those duties, the CIA was failing, and the report attributed poor leadership as the cause of the problems.⁵⁰ The NSC endorsed many of the report's recommendations, but initially, balked at replacing DCI Hillenkoetter, until a significant event occurred to induce a change—the CIA's failure to predict the North Korean invasion of South Korea.⁵¹ The failure prompted President Truman to appoint Walter Bedell Smith as DCI, effective October 7, 1950.

DCI Smith was responsible for reshaping the intelligence system by encouraging cohesiveness and sharing between the independent organizations. Smith was also responsible for implementing many of the recommendations that came from the Dulles Report.⁵² Smith arrived at the CIA with the intent make lasting improvements, and started to do so by hiring two authors of the report from which he worked—William Jackson as Deputy DCI and Allen Dulles as deputy director for operations.⁵³ Under Smith's forceful leadership, the Board and Office of National Estimates was created to generate National Intelligence Estimates; the Office of Current Intelligence was formed to produce a daily bulletin for the president; and, after pleading with the NSC, the military signals intelligence capabilities were folded into a national mission set under the auspices of the newly formed National Intelligence Agency, although the branches maintained their respective cryptologic arms.⁵⁴

The Dulles Report, coincidental with the outbreak of the Korean War and subsequent appointment of Smith as DCI, significantly impacted the cohesiveness of the IC. Although the National Security Act of 1947 laid the groundwork for the DCI to speak

⁵⁰ Warner and McDonald, "U.S Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 9–11.

⁵¹ Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 11.

⁵² Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 11–12.

⁵³ Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 12.

⁵⁴ Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 12.

on behalf of the intelligence components, DCI Smith actually used that authority to unite and form an intelligence community that he could represent. Furthermore, DCI Smith's changes within the CIA, specifically the creation of the current intelligence office, were instrumental in providing the groundwork for the DCI to develop a professional relationship with the president.

3. Schlesinger's Report Addressing Efficacy and Budgeting

The 1960s saw improvements in technological collection capabilities, and with them, a commensurate increase in the intelligence budget. President Richard Nixon, however, did not believe a correlating improvement in intelligence analysis and production existed—especially after the CIA failed to predict the coup in Cambodia.⁵⁵ As a result, President Nixon authorized Assistant Director of the White House Office of Management of Budget James Schlesinger to conduct a survey investigating resource management and analytical shortcomings within the intelligence community, and the result became known as The 1971 Schlesinger Report.⁵⁶

The 1971 Schlesinger Report identified two phenomena regarding the operations of the Intelligence Community: “The first is an impressive rise in their size and cost. The second is an apparent inability to achieve a commensurate improvement in the scope and overall quality of intelligence products.”⁵⁷ While actual numbers remain classified, and thus redacted from the report, Schlesinger and his team determined that the procedures and responsibilities, outlined in the National Security Act of 1947 and that DCI Smith refined and implemented, in which intelligence collection and reporting were assigned by department or agency, had worked well through the 1950s, but divisions between types of intelligence, such as military vs. non-military or tactical vs. strategic, were no longer clear because the need and ability to collect on the Soviet Union and its nuclear program were concerns for the military as well as civilians; technological advances in collection capabilities such as satellite photography and signals intelligence were both strategic and

⁵⁵ Warner and McDonald, “U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies,” 21.

⁵⁶ Warner and McDonald, “U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies,” 21–22.

⁵⁷ James Schlesinger, “A Review of the Intelligence Community,” (March 10, 1971), 1.

tactical in nature.⁵⁸ As a result, the IC had fallen back into the habit of duplicating efforts, a trend DCI Smith was thought to have corrected 10 years earlier.

The significance of Schlesinger's report lies in the recommendations proposed based on his conclusion: "while a number of specific measures may help to bring about a closer relationship between cost and effectiveness, the main hope for doing so lies in a fundamental reform of the intelligence community's decisionmaking [sic] bodies and procedures."⁵⁹ Like the Dulles Report, Schlesinger attributed the increased spending with little improvement intelligence quality, to poor leadership. According Schlesinger's findings, failing to give the DCI the responsibility of planning and rationalizing collection priorities had resulted in the individual components of the IC fighting to acquire the most sophisticated collection capabilities to maintain relevance.⁶⁰ This resulted in rapid, expensive, expansion and the resurgence of duplicative efforts across the components.⁶¹ To remedy this problem, Schlesinger went on to propose a myriad of solutions of varying severity, all with the intent to further centralize power to the DCI. Of Schlesinger's recommendations, the following were implemented: the appointment of a Deputy DCI; appointment of an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence; the complete merger of the armed services cryptologic arm into the NSA; and the creation of new offices and staff to assist the DCI in analysis.⁶² Furthermore, due to the Schlesinger Report, every DCI since has been expected to oversee and prepare the IC's budgets, establish collection requirements, prioritize assets, and implement and enforce quality control standards for intelligence products.⁶³

⁵⁸ Schlesinger, "A Review of the Intelligence Community," 3–4; Central Intelligence Agency, "A Look Back ... The Landmark Schlesinger Report, 1971," Central Intelligence Agency, last modified April 30, 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/featured-story-archive/2008-featured-story-archive/schlesinger-report.html>.

⁵⁹ Schlesinger, "A Review of the Intelligence Community," 2.

⁶⁰ Schlesinger, "A Review of the Intelligence Community," 8–10.

⁶¹ Schlesinger, "A Review of the Intelligence Community," 8–10.

⁶² Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 22.

⁶³ Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 22.

To solve the leadership problem, Schlesinger was the first to call for a DNI, whose sole responsibility would be the management of the Intelligence Community with the power and authority to do so. While some of Schlesinger's lesser recommendations were implemented, the Nixon administration, even with Schlesinger as DCI, were unable to fully implement the more radical changes envisioned, such as the establishment of the DNI, prior to the revelations of the Watergate Scandal and other incidents of misconduct committed by the intelligence community.⁶⁴ Watergate and the IC's infringements upon civil liberties forced Nixon's resignation, soured the American public to the thought of an all-powerful intelligence leader, and led to Congressional inquiries into the actions of the CIA and IC as a whole.⁶⁵ The idea of the creation of a DNI, however, remained a point of discussion.

4. Church Committee Report and Congressional Oversight

On December 22, 1974, a *New York Times* headline read, "Huge C.I.A. Operation Reported in U.S. Against Antiwar Forces, Other Dissidents in Nixon Years,," prompting Congress to launch the two most significant studies of intelligence during the 1970s. The first study was conducted by the Senate's Church Committee, and the second, by the House's Pike Committee.⁶⁶ That headline, coupled with the Watergate Committee's investigation and subsequent revelation of illegal executive authorization of domestic intelligence collection activities, led the Senate to launch an additional investigation into the possible misconduct of the intelligence community.⁶⁷ Senator Church and his colleagues conducted a thorough review of all intelligence community activities and spent over a year composing their findings, "preparing one of the most detailed public

⁶⁴ Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 21–23.

⁶⁵ Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 23, 25

⁶⁶ Seymour Hersh, "Huge C.I.A. Operation Reported in U.S. Against Antiwar Forces, Other Dissidents in Nixon Years," *New York Times*, December 22, 1974; Warner and McDonald, "U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies," 29.

⁶⁷ United States Senate, Art & History, "Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities," United States Senate, date accessed November 2 2017, <https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/investigations/ChurchCommittee.htm>.

appraisals of any nation's intelligence structure.”⁶⁸ The Committee's proposals regarding organization largely echoed prior executive reviews, namely the idea that the DCI should dedicate more time to managing the IC and focus less on running the CIA, but the bulk of the study and recommendations regarded the powers and accountability of clandestine operations.⁶⁹ Grudgingly, the report concluded that although, domestically, mistakes had been made and laws had been broken, the foreign activities the IC was conducting were paramount to national security and should be continued, but with additional oversight.⁷⁰

The Congressionally-launched investigations also spurred executive action regarding the oversight and management of the intelligence community in the form of Executive Orders that impact collections to this day. President Gerald Ford, in the wake of the investigations, passed Executive Order 11905, that President Jimmy Carter supplanted with Executive Order 12036, which among other things, officially appointed DCI as the head of the intelligence community and limited the DCI's role as director of the CIA.⁷¹ These executive orders, to include President Ronald Reagan's EO12333 also increased executive oversight of the intelligence community and restricted activities to include domestic collection activities as well as banned political assassinations abroad.⁷²

Although the reports varied in findings, the effects were similar. Both the House of Representatives and the Senate established permanent committees to oversee intelligence activities. Congressional oversight encouraged a more disciplined and ethical IC, and, in conjunction with the appropriations committees, made the IC more accountable for its actions and spending to both Congress and the president whereas before, the IC was only accountable to the president.⁷³ The additional oversight also had the added benefit of curbing investigations and reviews of the IC for years to come,

⁶⁸ Warner and McDonald, “U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies,” 29.

⁶⁹ Warner and McDonald, “U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies,” 29.

⁷⁰ Warner and McDonald, “U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies,” 29.

⁷¹ Exec. Order No. 11905, 41 F.R. 1041 (1976), <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/eo11905.htm>.

⁷² Warner and McDonald, “U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies,” 30; Exec. Order No. 11905, Exec. Order No. 12036, 43 F.R. 3674 (1978), <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/eo/eo-12036.htm>.

⁷³ Warner and McDonald, “U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies,” 29–30.

lending an explanation as to why the next investigation and subsequent changes occurred nearly 20 years later following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

5. Post-9/11 Reforms

The most recent and substantial changes to date for the Intelligence Community came following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The 9/11 Commission Report concluded that the IC was still structured and reported in a manner suitable for specialized mission sets dedicated to tracking Cold War targets instead of being an integrated community capable of seamless sharing of information which contributed in part to the failure of the community to analyze the terrorist threat.⁷⁴ They went on to outline six problems that contributed to the failures that could be remedied with a simple restructure: central to this argument was the recognition that the DCI was over-encumbered in responsibilities enumerated in the National Security Act of 1947, and, with the advancement of defense department organic collection capabilities, the DCI's ability to influence and prioritize collection resources has diminished.⁷⁵ The report goes so far as to state:

The DCI now has at least three jobs. He is expected to run a particular agency, the CIA. He is expected to manage the loose confederation of agencies that is the intelligence community. He is expected to be the analyst in chief for the government, sifting evidence and directly briefing the President as his principal intelligence adviser. No recent DCI has been able to do all three effectively. Usually what loses out is management of the intelligence community, a difficult task even in the best case because the DCI's current authorities are weak.⁷⁶

The report went on to note that the DCI lacked the ability to control the budget, hire or fire senior managers, or establish and enforce analytical procedures and standards across the community.⁷⁷ The natural solution to remedy the DCI's workload and lack of

⁷⁴ *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office (2011), 407.

⁷⁵ *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 408–409.

⁷⁶ *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 409.

⁷⁷ *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 409–410.

authority was to create the position Schlesinger advocated for thirty years earlier: A director of national intelligence. The committee advocated for a “National Intelligence Director” whose primary responsibility would be to act as the principal intelligence adviser to the president and would also be responsible overseeing and managing the budget for the IC.⁷⁸ In creating an oversight position, the position of DCI would be dissolved, freeing the former DCI to focus on the CIA instead of running the community as a whole, while running the CIA, and serving to advise the president. The recommendation was received and fully implemented, first with executive orders, and then with Congress’s passing of the Intelligence and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004.

The passing of the National Security Intelligence Reform Act of 2004 was the largest reform of the Intelligence Community since its inception, bringing to fruition the notion of a community leader independent of the individual components. The creation of the DNI further consolidated the power and authorities of the intelligence community into a single position. The DNI also replaced the DCI as the principal intelligence adviser to the president, and thus, inherited the role of speaking on behalf of the IC and serving as the primary representative of the IC to the president.⁷⁹ As a result, one possible conclusion is that the relationship between the DNI and the president is representative of the relationship the president enjoys with the IC as a whole.

C. INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP

As the reforms of the Intelligence Community occurred—consolidating or expanding the responsibilities of various agencies, and technological advances changed methods for collecting information—the membership of the intelligence community also changed. This section will briefly discuss the current members of the intelligence community to include their foundations, component evolution, incorporation into the IC, and basic responsibilities.

⁷⁸ *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 411–415.

⁷⁹ National Security Act of 1947.

As it stands today, the Intelligence Community is comprised of 17 components that are organized into two independent agencies, eight DOD elements, and representation from seven other departments and agencies, all of which fall under the DNI and his Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI).⁸⁰ The two independent agencies are the CIA and the ODNI.⁸¹ The CIA's primary responsibility is to provide intelligence regarding national intelligence to the executive and congressional intelligence committees.⁸² The CIA is also the primary manager for human intelligence, so the director serves as the National Human Source Intelligence manager.⁸³ ODNI's primary mission is to lead the IC and to deliver the most insightful intelligence possible, but it also contains compartments dedicated to national intelligence concerns such as counter-proliferation, counter-terrorism, counter-intelligence, and cyber threats.⁸⁴ The DCI and DNI were or are the leaders of the organizations in this section, so the CIA is the primary component of the IC being studied in this thesis while headed by the DCI, with the DNI's ODNI being the organization in focus for all cases post 9/11.

Although not the focus of this study, the Department of Defense elements fall under the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). While subservient to the intelligence requirements promulgated by the DNI, those elements are in place primarily to support the senior members in the DOD. DOD elements include Army intelligence, Navy intelligence, Marine Corps intelligence, Air Force intelligence, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), National

⁸⁰ “Members of the IC,” Office of the Director of National Intelligence, accessed November 19, 2017, [https://www.dni.gov/index.php/what-we-do/members-of-the-ic?highlight=WytZWl1ZXJzIiwibWVtYmVyIiwibWVtYmVyJ3MiLCJtZWl1ZXJzJyIsIm9mIiwidGhlIiwjI3RoZSIsImljIiwiaWMncyIsImljZSIslmjZSDzIiwiaWNzIiwibWVtYmVycyBvZiIsImIlbWJlcngMbGbygdGhlIiwibWVtYmVycyBvZiGhIIGljIiwidGhlIGljlIIO=.](https://www.dni.gov/index.php/what-we-do/members-of-the-ic?highlight=WytZWl1ZXJzIiwibWVtYmVyIiwibWVtYmVyJ3MiLCJtZWl1ZXJzJyIsIm9mIiwidGhlIiwjI3RoZSIsImljIiwiaWMncyIsImljZSIslmjZSDzIiwiaWNzIiwibWVtYmVycyBvZiIsImIlbWJlcngMbGbygdGhlIiwibWVtYmVycyBvZiGhIIGljIiwidGhlIGljlIIO=)

⁸¹ Office of the Director of National Intelligence, “Members of the IC.”

⁸² Office of the Director of National Intelligence, “Members of the IC.”

⁸³ Office of the Director of National Intelligence, “Members of the IC.”

84 “Organization,” Office of the Director of National Intelligence, accessed November 19, 2017, <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/who-we-are/organizations?highlight=WyJvcmdhbml6YXRpb24iLCJvcmdhbml6YXRpb25zIiwib3JnYW5pemUiLCJvcmdhbml6ZWQlLCJvcmdhbml6ZXMiLCJvcmdhbml6aW5nIiwib3JnYW4iLCJvcmdhbml6YXRpb24ncyIsIm9yZ2FuaWMiLCJvcmdhbml6ZXIiLCJvcmdhbmljYWxseSIsm9yZ2FuaXplcnMiLCJvcmdhbml6YXRpb25zJyIsIm9yZ2FuaXphdGlvbiciXQ==>.

Reconnaissance Office (NRO), and the National Security Agency (NSA).⁸⁵ The other intelligence community members include representatives from the Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Energy, Department of Treasury, Drug Enforcement Agency, FBI, and Coast Guard intelligence,⁸⁶

The ODNI defines the Intelligence Community as “a federation of executive branch agencies and organizations that work separately and together to conduct intelligence activities necessary for the conduct of foreign relations and the protection of national security of the United States.”⁸⁷ The ODNI’s definition reinforces the notion that the IC, led by the DNI, is responsible primarily for serving the president.

D. THE PRESIDENT’S INTELLIGENCE AND DIRECTION

For the Intelligence Community to be successful, accurate and timely information must be communicated to a policymaker who is receptive to the information. The DCI/DNI is obligated ensure the president, and others, receive the intelligence support required, but to do so, he must receive guidance on how and what information the president needs or to which he will be receptive. This section will examine a few of the methods available for the IC to provide the president information and receive feedback that will be used later in the thesis to evaluate the relationship between the parties.

1. In-Person Briefings

Upon the passing of President Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman inherited the presidency after less than twelve weeks of experience as vice president. During that short period of time, Truman had had only limited contact with Roosevelt and little had been done to prepare him for the momentous task of serving as president.⁸⁸ As a result, President Truman had no knowledge of the Manhattan Project or Roosevelt’s post-war plans; he walked into the White House completely ignorant of nearly all classified issues

⁸⁵ Office of the Director of National Intelligence, “Members of the IC.”

⁸⁶ Office of the Director of National Intelligence, “Members of the IC.”

⁸⁷ Office of the Director of National Intelligence, “Organization.”

⁸⁸ Priess, *The President’s Book of Secrets*, 4.

because President Roosevelt did not think it pertinent that his vice president be informed of intelligence matters.⁸⁹ With the advent of the atomic bomb and beginning of the Cold War, Truman did not want his successor to be as blindsided as Truman himself was upon entering office. As a result, President Truman authorized classified briefings for Republican and Democratic presidential nominees, a tradition that has continued to this day.⁹⁰

In-person briefings remain a method for portraying relevant intelligence to the president with several advantages. In person briefings allow the briefer receive immediate feedback by gauging president's interest in the material being provided. It also provides a mechanism for answering the president's questions regarding the material and protects the most sensitive information by preventing distribution. Face-to-face interactions between the president and the DNI/DCI are also important in establishing a relationship, whether good or bad. For example, as will be further studied, President Kennedy had negative impressions of DCI Dulles, feeling as though Dulles was patronizing and that his briefings lacked depth which in turn limited the access Dulles had to President Kennedy leading up to the Bay of Pigs disaster.⁹¹ From the start, President George W. Bush, on the other hand, used his briefings to dive deeper into the material and was very interactive providing the IC lots of feedback on the quality and content of the material they were providing to the president, helping to establish a supportive, positive relationship.⁹²

2. The President's Daily Brief

The PDB is a DNI-produced, all-source intelligence document, delivered daily to the president, and a presidentially-approved distribution list. It headlines the most

⁸⁹ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 4.

⁹⁰ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 10.

⁹¹ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 48.

⁹² Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 225; Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 159.

important intelligence issues and traces its origin to the early 1960s.⁹³ Daily intelligence products have been delivered to the president since President Truman was in office receiving the *Daily Summary*, but the development of the President's Intelligence Checklist (PICL), which subsequently evolved into the PDB, was a remarkable realization in the IC that the personality of the president mattered for successful communication of intelligence; that what worked for one president, would not necessarily work for the next—an issue that will later be examined in depth; and that intelligence needed to come from the community and go directly to the president without editing from outside the intelligence community to ensure the information remained unbiased.⁹⁴

The PDB is produced for the President of the United States as its first and primary customer. The content selected and analysis conducted reflects both what the IC deems as relevant, emerging, current intelligence, but also reflects the policy interests of the president. Throughout its history, Priess argues that the PDB was most useful to the president and IC when the president also received a briefing of the book, instead of reading it alone, and when the president made written comments regarding the material contained within as to provide feedback to the IC.⁹⁵

Many former presidents and principal advisers to the president regard the PDB as one of the most useful and influential documents they received, especially pertaining to matters of intelligence.⁹⁶ Because it was customized to the needs of each president and represented the IC's most important daily concerns for the president, the president's level of use and receptivity to the document can serve as a gauge as to the president's receptivity and overall opinion of the IC. If the president found the document useful or personalized and read or had the document briefed to him and his advisers daily, it signifies a positive relationship with the community whereas if the president found the

⁹³ "The Evolution of the President's Daily Brief," Central Intelligence Agency, July 10, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/featured-story-archive/2014-featured-story-archive/the-evolution-of-the-presidents-daily-brief.html>.

⁹⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, "The Evolution of the President's Daily Brief."

⁹⁵ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*.

⁹⁶ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*.

document useless, did not read the document, or make suggestions for improving the mechanism in which intelligence was delivered, it will signify a negative relationship with the community.

3. National Security Strategy

The National Security Strategy (NSS) is a document produced annually by the Executive Branch for Congress, required to be submitted on the same day as the budget for the next fiscal year.⁹⁷ According to the Gold-Water Nichols Act, the NSS should outline vital interests to the U.S. government, identify resources and “capabilities necessary to deter aggression and implement the national security strategy,” address the adequacy of U.S. capabilities to execute the national strategy, and propose how to best employ instruments of national power to achieve the national strategy.⁹⁸ Although the NSS is not a method for the IC to communicate with the president, it does serve to alert the IC as to what the president perceives as a vital interest provides direction to the IC as to how to focus collection assets, analysis, and reporting to best support the president. Although the NSS is an immensely important document for national security and foreign policy, it is not heavily influential in the relationship between the IC and president and will not be evaluated in this study.

4. National Intelligence Estimates

National Intelligence Estimates represent the most developed strategic assessment the Intelligence Community has on a subject and have historically been produced by the CIA. After the Dulles Report’s revelation that the CIA had been failing in producing quality national intelligence, DCI Smith formed the Board of National Estimates with the responsibility of producing the National Intelligence Estimates.⁹⁹ Although NIEs are the most formal assessments the IC has to offer, the assessments tend to provide in-depth

⁹⁷ Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, 50 U.S.C. § 404a (1986), http://history.defense.gov/Portals/70/Documents/dod_reforms/Goldwater-NicholsDODReordAct1986.pdf.

⁹⁸ Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.

⁹⁹ Warner and McDonald, “U.S. Intelligence Community Reform Studies,” iii.

analysis of longstanding, complex issues with strategic implications and have not been viewed as particularly useful in day-to-day policy decisions.¹⁰⁰ As a result, they are not regularly produced, and therefore, will not be used to as an indicator of the quality of relationship between the president and the IC. The NIEs impacts on the credibility of the intelligence community and subsequent fallout, however, will be discussed in a later chapter as it pertained to the relationship between President George W. Bush and the IC.

E. CONCLUSION

The history and reforms of the Intelligence Community are instrumental in understanding why the relationship between the DCI/DNI and president is representative of the relationship the president has with the Intelligence Community as a whole. Each reform consolidated reporting and power within the DCI, culminating with passage of the National Security Intelligence Reform Act of 2004 which implemented Schlesinger's 1971 recommendation of appointing a community director responsible for oversight, direction, budgeting, and ultimately responsible for ensuring that the highest quality, all-source intelligence reaches the president. Because the DCI/DNI is the principal intelligence adviser to the executive, the relationship between the IC and the president will be evaluated based on the relationship the president had with his DNI/DCI.

Like the DCI was, the DNI is a presidentially-appointed position. This means that the appointee should be able to establish trust and rapport with the president, thus enabling a fruitful relationship. As this study will show, however, no president since Dwight Eisenhower has been served by only one DCI/DNI, indicating that the establishment of trust in IC leadership is not based strictly on the ability to present intelligence assessments to the president and that personalities matter.

Second only to face-to-face briefs, the PDB has proven to be the most reliable method of communication between the president and Intelligence Community, especially during times when the DCI and National Security Council staff avoided interring with its

¹⁰⁰ Richard A. Best Jr., *Intelligence Estimates: How useful to Congress*, CRS Report No. RL33733 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2011), <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/intel/RL33733.pdf>.

analysis and content. As a result, the attitude with which the president received PDB also serves as an indicator as to the president's opinion of the IC, providing yet another mechanism by which the relationship between the president and IC can be measured.

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III. JOHN F. KENNEDY'S FAILURES AND SUCCESSES

A. INTRODUCTION

President John Kennedy's time in office offers the most informative and interesting perspective on the significance of the relationship between the IC and the president because the relationship underwent a full reform following a massive failure suffered early in his presidency. Kennedy's presidency also demonstrates what can happen when the IC, through the DCI/DNI, recognizes and adjusts to differing presidential personalities. Finally, the relationship between DCI Allen Dulles and John F. Kennedy provides insight into characteristics of a DCI/DNI that impede communication and the formation of a productive working relationship.

This chapter will explore the relationship between President Kennedy and the Intelligence Community, the impact that relationship had on the infamous Bay of Pigs failure, and changes that were made as a result of the failure. Furthermore, this chapter will examine the importance of addressing changes in people with differing personalities to establish effective communication necessary for the IC to have a supportive relationship with the President. In examining Kennedy's presidency, this chapter will answer the following questions proposed in Chapter I: Does a poor relationship between the president and IC contribute to intelligence and operational failures? Will a failure lead to changes in the relationship? Finally, does a positive relationship contribute to intelligence and operational successes? When the relationship between Kennedy and the IC suffered, the failed invasion at the Bay of Pigs occurred; however, as the relationship improved, Kennedy and his team were able to successfully resolve one of the tensest situations in history, the Cuban Missile Crisis.

B. KENNEDY'S EARLY RELATIONSHIP

As this section will demonstrate in detail, President Kennedy began forming his relationship with the Intelligence Community within days of being named the 1960 Democratic presidential nominee. Initially, it appeared as though Kennedy would develop a strong relationship with the IC, but that illusion was quickly dispelled and a poor

relationship ensued, providing a contributing factor to a massive failure. The conditions for an effective relationship, mainly communication and receptivity to information, appeared to be present following Kennedy's acceptance of the Democrats' nomination. As he progressed through campaigning, transition, and early presidency, Kennedy appeared to place a low priority on foreign intelligence, and as a result, was less receptive to information, so communication dropped off. Furthermore, DCI Allen Dulles and President Kennedy did not trust each other, leading to conditions in which the IC did not provide necessary support to the president. The poor relationship proved to be one of many factors contributing to the failure of the invasion at the Bay of Pigs.

Professor and Special Assistant to the President (Kennedy) for Latin American Affairs Arthur Schlesinger and CIA Inspector General John Helgerson are the primary sources for establishing Kennedy's early relationship with the Intelligence Community. It is important to understand the bias that each author held as he approached his work. Schlesinger worked closely with Kennedy from candidacy through his presidency. As a result, Schlesinger tended to shield Kennedy from blame and spin Kennedy's actions in a positive light. Helgerson, on the other hand, was a career CIA officer. Helgerson acknowledged some IC fault for failures, but was also quick to point out how other parties contributed to the failure. These biases were recognized and accounted for in researching and reporting on Kennedy's early relationship with the IC.

1. From Nomination to Election: The Souring Relationship

Democratic Presidential Nominee Kennedy began developing his relationship with President Eisenhower's Intelligence Community when Eisenhower opted to continue President Truman's practice of allowing the Central Intelligence Agency to brief the presidential candidates.¹⁰¹ Following Kennedy's nomination President Eisenhower immediately reached out to Kennedy to offer classified briefings. Kennedy was quick to

¹⁰¹ As Roosevelt's Vice President, Truman was often shielded or intentionally excluded from major foreign policy actions and sensitive projects. As a result, he had no knowledge of the Manhattan Project until he took the office following Roosevelt's death. Because the atomic bomb changed the calculus of existential threats, Truman insisted presidential candidates be briefed to avoid the situation in which he found himself. Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 34.

accept. Only five days after his nomination, Kennedy received his first briefing. During the briefing, he was exposed to classified information, to include covert operations in progress or in planning.¹⁰² Being so quick to accept the invitation for briefings was an indication that Kennedy would be receptive to intelligence reporting, facilitating communication that could serve as a solid base for a strong working relationship with the IC.

Kennedy's first briefing lasted over two hours, and at its conclusion, Kennedy offered insight into the support he would want as president by requesting that Dulles cover potential trouble spots in the world in follow-on briefings.¹⁰³ Once again, it appeared as though Kennedy was making an effort to establish a good working relationship with the DCI. Based on Dulles's records of the briefing, Kennedy appeared to be inquisitive and attentive to the information being provided, asking questions about possible developments that might arise.¹⁰⁴ The fact that Kennedy asked questions about future problem areas and asked to be updated on them during subsequent briefings indicates that Kennedy had faith in and trusted the judgements of the IC; however, scheduling issues and revelations of classified information during public debates soon soured the promising relationship.

Kennedy received his first brief July 23, 1960, leaving a positive impression with Dulles about the candidate's receptivity to intelligence. Through no fault of Dulles, Kennedy's next brief would not come until September 19, 1960, and that brief established more realistic expectations of how Kennedy would interact with the IC early in his presidency. During this time, elder statesman Adlai Stevenson II reminded Kennedy that, if elected, Kennedy would need to be brought up to speed quickly on foreign policy, as Kennedy had been engrossed in domestic politics during the campaign.¹⁰⁵ Instead of reaching out to the DCI, however, Kennedy commissioned

¹⁰² Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 34.

¹⁰³ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 34–35.

¹⁰⁴ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 34.

¹⁰⁵ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 64.

Stevenson to prepare a brief to update Kennedy on foreign policy. Kennedy's decision to use Stevenson demonstrated a growing distance between Kennedy and the IC. Stevenson, while savvy about foreign policy, was not as well informed on foreign intelligence—which forms the basis for foreign policy—as the DCI.

On September 17, 1960, Kennedy's staff reached out to Dulles and requested that he prepare a brief for Kennedy to be delivered at Kennedy's Georgetown home on September 19.¹⁰⁶ The hastily prepared briefing would be Kennedy's second and last pre-election brief delivered by the DCI. When Dulles arrived for the brief, Kennedy had other visitors to tend to as well, resulting in only thirty minutes being allotted to the DCI.¹⁰⁷ The lack of time allotted for the briefing and the time between briefs created the impression that Kennedy did not place a high value on intelligence briefings. The minimal time to prepare the brief, on Sunday, September 18, followed by condensing the scheduled briefing time likely negatively impacted Dulles's feelings for the Democratic nominee. As that briefing concluded, Kennedy once again requested that he be informed of any trouble spots in the world, a request that Dulles never acted on. In late October 1960, a month later, with the election rapidly approaching, the information was requested again, but this time to acting DCI Charles Cabell, bringing about a response within 24 hours.¹⁰⁸ The lack of DCI Dulles's receptivity to the presidential nominee's request further demonstrates the strained relationship between the IC and Kennedy, even before his election.

Questions also arose following the presidential debates about Kennedy's ability to protect classified information, which fostered distrust between the candidate and the Intelligence Community. During the campaign, Kennedy had appeared weak on Communism because he called for an apology for the U2 flight in which Gary Powers was shot down. Nixon then accused Kennedy of being unwilling to defend small,

¹⁰⁶ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 34–35.

¹⁰⁷ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 35.

¹⁰⁸ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 35.

Nationalist-held islands off the coast of China.¹⁰⁹ As a result, Kennedy's speechwriter, Richard Goodwin, without showing the statement to Kennedy, drafted a press release about supporting anti-Castro Cuban exiles efforts to overthrow Castro.¹¹⁰ Nixon asserted that he and Kennedy both knew that a top secret plan concerning the matter was already underway, which forced Nixon to take an opposite stand the following day at the fourth televised debate. During the debate, Nixon called Kennedy's press release regarding action in Cuba, "the most dangerously irresponsible recommendations that he has made during the course of the campaign."¹¹¹ Schlesinger, however, maintains that the statement was released as no more than "rhetorical flourish" in an effort to make Kennedy appear hard on Communist expansion before Kennedy and his staff had any knowledge of the covert plans underway.¹¹² Theodore Sorensen stated that he was certain Kennedy had not yet been briefed on the plans prior to the release of the statement., adding, "his reference to more assertive action regarding Cuba was put in by one of my assistants to give him something to say."¹¹³ None of Dulles's records from his briefings to Kennedy indicated that Kennedy had been briefed on the covert actions regarding Cuba.¹¹⁴ The public release of an ongoing covert action program, however, raised questions about what Dulles briefed Kennedy and raised questions about the security of the information that is presented to a presidential candidate. In fact, as a result of Kennedy's statements, subsequent presidential candidate briefings have lacked information on covert action programs and human-source collection programs until after the candidate has been elected.¹¹⁵ The fact that these questions were raised indicates that the DCI was no longer comfortable providing requested support to Kennedy. That loss of communication between the IC and presidential candidate further

¹⁰⁹ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 30.

¹¹⁰ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 30–31.

¹¹¹ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 225–226; Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 31.

¹¹² Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 225.

¹¹³ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 32.

¹¹⁴ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 36

¹¹⁵ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 32.

demonstrates the fractured relationship between the presidential candidate and DCI instructed to support him.

While Kennedy's relationship with the Intelligence Community started with potential, his delay in requesting additional briefings, the time allotted to the briefings, and possibly, the way he handled the material that was briefed all contributed to suboptimal conditions for an effective working relationship as the 1960 presidential election approached.

Although Kennedy was responsible for a portion of the fractured relationship, culpability also falls on Dulles. Dulles failed to oblige Kennedy's later requests, and as will be further explored, failed to support Kennedy as president-elect and president because Dulles did not adapt to Kennedy's personality and habits. As an intelligence professional, Dulles failed to provide timely, accurate, amplifying information to Kennedy in a manner that Kennedy could digest, leaving Kennedy uninformed.

2. President-Elect Kennedy

On November 8, 1960, John Kennedy went from being the hopeful Democratic nominee for president to president-elect. DCI Allen Dulles realized the importance of repairing the estranged relationship that had developed between them and sought to make improvements. Kennedy, however, lost interest in establishing or maintaining positive ties, further contributing to the ineffective relationship which was characterized by incompatible personalities, lack of effective communication, and the perpetuation of the impression that intelligence was a low priority for the president-elect.

President-elect Kennedy and DCI Dulles had incompatible personalities. Although he was no fan of Dulles, Kennedy chose to keep him in the position, but for the wrong reasons.¹¹⁶ Instead of keeping Dulles as DCI because Kennedy trusted and respected Dulles's ability to do his job, Kennedy reappointed Dulles because Dulles was

¹¹⁶ As President-elect, Kennedy did not have the power to remove Dulles as DCI; however, in his simultaneously released first two appointments, Kennedy named Dulles as DCI. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 125.

still a national icon.¹¹⁷ Kennedy believed firing him would have a significant political cost, whereas, leaving Dulles as DCI would earn Kennedy support from Dulles's admirers around the nation.¹¹⁸ This illustrates President-elect Kennedy's continued lack of desire to establish a fruitful, working relationship with the IC. Instead of appointing a person in whom he trusted and would communicate with, Kennedy left Dulles in the job as part of a political strategy, despite their incompatible personalities. In fact, senior agency officials and Kennedy's speechwriter, Ted Sorensen, would later report that Dulles may have patronized Kennedy during the early briefings, and that Kennedy was not very impressed with the briefings provided by Dulles because they lacked depth and did not provide any information beyond what Kennedy could read in the newspapers.¹¹⁹

President-elect Kennedy's failure to provide guidance during his first briefing about the Central Intelligence Agency's plans for Cuba also demonstrates his ineffective relationship with the Intelligence Community based on a lack of communication. Shortly after the election, DCI Allen Dulles and Deputy Director for Plans (operations) Richard Bissel provided Kennedy an in depth briefing of covert actions regarding Cuba. Bissel later reported that Kennedy was predominantly a listener during this brief, asking very few questions, and revealing no opinions for the operation underway.¹²⁰ Because Kennedy did not provide suggestions, guidance, or insight into his political agenda regarding Cuba throughout the brief, Dulles and Bissel were unable to ascertain whether or not he supported ongoing efforts, leaving them uninformed as to how to proceed with planning. Without communication or direction from Kennedy, Bissel and Dulles assumed the president-elect viewed the plan favorably and continued the program of training exiles and developing dissident groups in Cuba. The lack of communication at this briefing directly impacted the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion.

¹¹⁷ Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House*, 125.

¹¹⁸ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 125.

¹¹⁹ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 48.

¹²⁰ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 40–42.

Whether intentional or not, President-Elect Kennedy's further actions continued to create the appearance that intelligence was not a high priority. These actions included a cancelled visit to the CIA headquarters and his reappointment of Dulles as DCI. Kennedy was the first president-elect to request to visit the CIA since its creation.¹²¹ Dulles and eight other senior officers developed an ambitious agenda for the visit, containing briefs on the CIA's creation, mission, organization, and explanations of key directorates to include clandestine collections and covert activities.¹²² Due to scheduling difficulties, the December 16 visit was cancelled, and Kennedy was unable to visit until after his inauguration on January 26. Even then, briefing during his one-and-a-half-hour visit was cut short because Kennedy chose to dedicate time to reading letters loaned by his alma mater that were part of an exhibit the Agency had put up a few weeks earlier.¹²³ Helgerson did not elaborate on the scheduling difficulty that prevented the December 16 visit to the CIA headquarters, but the president-elect was photographed in his Georgetown home with Alaska Senators E.L. Bartlett and Ernest Gruening.¹²⁴ Kennedy's cancellation of the visit during the transition period, and his decision to spend time reading an exhibit instead of attending briefings when he finally did visit the CIA headquarters demonstrated that the newly elected and inaugurated president did not place a high priority on the importance or functions of the CIA, furthering the suboptimal relationship between the IC and the president. Additionally, the decision to keep Dulles on as DCI indicated that President-elect Kennedy did not place a high value on intelligence because he did not care for Dulles, yet he left Dulles at the head of the IC.

3. Post-inauguration

Up to inauguration, President-elect John Kennedy was reliant upon President Eisenhower's Intelligence Community because Kennedy could not make changes to the structure, personnel, or information received during the lame duck period. After his

¹²¹ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 46.

¹²² Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 46–47.

¹²³ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 47.

¹²⁴ Daily JFK, "Friday, December 16, 1960," <http://www.dailyjfk.com/days/december-16-1960/>.

inauguration, however, President Kennedy was free to, but did not, make changes to how he was briefed or by whom, even though Eisenhower's team and style did not suit Kennedy's personality, which further degraded the relationship he shared with the IC.

Eisenhower demanded structured and scheduled briefings whereas Kennedy disliked the bureaucracy associated with government and preferred more of an ad hoc briefing. For the duration of his presidency, Eisenhower preferred to receive intelligence in the form of weekly, formal briefs to himself and the National Security Council (NSC), presented by DCI Dulles, which allowed all the key players in policy decisions to discuss the same intelligence in policy formation.¹²⁵ This resulted in great communication and feedback between Eisenhower and the IC. It also ensured the IC was informed of policy concerns, allowing the IC to tailor its reporting based on the needs of the NSC and president which helped form a supportive relationship between IC and president Eisenhower. Kennedy, on the other hand, saw Eisenhower's NSC as a bureaucratic monster that was an impediment to the free flow of ideas and formation of policy, so he directed his National Security Adviser, McGeorge Bundy, to trim the NSC into a flexible organization capable of squarely confronting real policy decisions.¹²⁶ Priess elaborates on the difference in styles, stating that Kennedy "adopted an improvisational style built around informal conversations," that more closely resembled a "pickup game of football crossed with a Harvard seminar."¹²⁷ Even with the condensed NSC, the NSC encountered a core problem in trying to support Kennedy: Kennedy's short attention span made it nearly impossible to keep the president engaged in national security discussions to the point that Kennedy got up and walked out the first time NSC Executive Secretary Bromley Smith gave a formal brief.¹²⁸ This vast difference in styles exacerbated the poor relationship between Kennedy and the IC because, without communication, the IC was unable to ascertain the needs of the president. Meanwhile, the president was losing patience with the IC because, in his eyes, they were not providing any more information

¹²⁵ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 20–22.

¹²⁶ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 207–210.

¹²⁷ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 15.

¹²⁸ Priess, *For the President's Eyes Only*, 19.

than he could obtain reading the morning newspapers.¹²⁹ Additionally, while discussing Kennedy's core advisors and the NSC, Schlesinger never mentions DCI Dulles or any representatives of the IC, highlighting both the low priority Kennedy placed on foreign intelligence and the poor status of the relationship he shared with the IC.

Personal chemistry was lacking and a significant age gap existed between President Kennedy and DCI Dulles. According to Helgerson, Dulles continuously attempted traditional methods of sharing intelligence with President Kennedy; however, as discussed above, President Kennedy was not a fan of traditional, bureaucratic methods such as lengthy, wordy memos or long, traditional briefs. Dulles's ability to brief President Kennedy was limited because, unlike Eisenhower, Kennedy did not hold regular NSC meetings. Because briefing opportunities were few, when Dulles wanted to express urgent information or important national estimates to President Kennedy, Dulles would draft long memorandums and try to personally deliver them to Kennedy. Kennedy, however, did not find value in the memos, leading to a more estranged relationship with the DCI, nearly devoid of communication, which set the stage for the failure at the Bay of Pigs.¹³⁰

Upon being elected, Kennedy began receiving the same daily products as President Eisenhower had. Eisenhower granted his request, but it was more information than Kennedy expected. Helgerson notes that Kennedy began each day reading five or six newspapers before getting out of bed. Kennedy would then receive the CIA's *Current Intelligence Bulletin* in a large package that contained other material as well. Because the packet of products was so abundant, much of it remained unread.¹³¹ Kennedy's military aide Ted Clifton urged the CIA to cut down the material to a double-spaced two pages, free of bureaucratic prose because, although it worked for Eisenhower, Kennedy did not have the patience to work through the thick booklet of briefing papers.¹³² Kennedy's

¹²⁹ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 48.

¹³⁰ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 48.

¹³¹ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 48.

¹³² Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 16

decision not to alter how he received material or what material he received, despite his vastly different personality from Eisenhower, resulted in an IC that was unable to effectively support the president. As will be shown in the next section, this resulted in Kennedy being less informed than he should have been going into the execution of the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Kennedy's early interactions with the Intelligence Community demonstrates the importance of personnel and communication in establishing a good relationship with the Intelligence Community. Kennedy reappointed Dulles as DCI even though they clearly had incompatible personalities which prevented Kennedy from fully incorporating Dulles into Kennedy's system. Furthermore, Kennedy's decision to keep Eisenhower's products without maintaining the structured briefings resulted in Kennedy not receiving effective support from the IC. Overall, although the relationship started with potential during the campaign, going into April 1961, a poor relationship that was nearly absent of communication, existed between President Kennedy and the IC.

C. THE BAY OF PIGS FIASCO

The poor relationship between President Kennedy and DCI Dulles, in the form of minimal communication and differing personalities, negatively impacted the outcome of the 1961 attempted invasion at the Bay of Pigs. From the first brief through the operation's commencement, Kennedy failed to communicate his policy concerns, objectives, or intentions to Dulles. Dulles, likewise, failed to adapt to Kennedy's presidential style to learn Kennedy's political objectives, resulting in his inability to support those objectives. Instead, Dulles pushed his own objectives by strongly advocating for the invasion which obscured his ability to remain objective about the best course of action or likelihood of success for the intended operation. Leading up to the operation's execution, failure to communicate coupled with differing personalities resulted in the formation of faulty assumptions, by both Kennedy and Dulles, and fostered an environment in which key advisers were unwilling to speak out against the plan. These effects of the poor relationship manifested during the operation and contributed to the overall failure.

1. Briefings Leading up to the Operation

According to Helgerson, on November 18, 1960, only ten days after the election, DCI Dulles and Bissel provided Kennedy his first full brief on the covert actions targeting Castro, as the plans existed at the time. In briefing the president-elect on options for Cuba, Bissell and Dulles sought only to inform him of the authorizations they had received under Eisenhower, how preparations were progressing, and outlined three phases of paramilitary action in Cuba: the first phase, already underway, focused on the training and development of anti-Castro dissident groups to conduct guerrilla operations in Cuba; the second potential phase was for trained, exiled Cubans to conduct a combined sea and air assault with emphasis placed on timing and numbers of men and equipment; the third possible phase was overt U.S. air support for the exiles and guerrilla forces as they approached Havana. The briefers intended to make clear to Kennedy that guerrilla forces would not be enough by themselves to incite revolt and overthrow Castro; however, it is unclear whether they provided the more pessimistic assessment that the operation would fail without direct U.S. involvement. Kennedy listened carefully to the briefing, and although he later made multiple inquiries about the possibilities of success, at this brief he did not ask many questions or provide insight into his intentions for Cuba policy once inaugurated.¹³³ This first briefing illuminates the importance of communication. Had Dulles and Bissel effectively communicated the necessity for overt U.S. support to the guerrillas, Kennedy may have been more apt to provide guidance as to how he would like to proceed once inaugurated, or Kennedy could have freely volunteered that information so the CIA planners could proceed in a course that would appease the incumbent as well as the incoming president. Instead, the previously-formed, estranged relationship prohibited free, open, honest communication between the individuals.

The poor communication at the first briefing contributed to the project to taking on a life of its own before Kennedy could be briefed again. On November 29, 1960, DCI Dulles met with President Eisenhower to update him on the progress of plans for Cuba,

¹³³ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 40–42.

during which, Eisenhower urged Dulles to actively pursue plans for the project.¹³⁴ With those orders and a feeling of general approval from the first briefing with Kennedy, Dulles and Bissel proceeded planning, nearly unchecked, throughout the transition period.

During this period, the Central Intelligence Agency exceeded its original authorizations to build a covert army of Cuban exiles trained to conduct guerrilla warfare in Cuba while maintaining U.S. plausible deniability.¹³⁵ Schlesinger notes that the original plan, that dictated multiple infiltrations of small groups of anti-Castro guerrillas to conduct sabotage and incite civil unrest, was scrapped. Instead, the American lieutenant colonel responsible for training guerrillas in Guatemala expressed his concern that the force currently in training was too small to militarily overthrow Castro and pushed for expanded recruitment. This resulted in bringing in former supporters of Batista and former members of Batista's military.¹³⁶ This led to disgruntlement, and nearly an open rebellion, between the pro-Batista and anti-Batista groups already in Guatemala. It also resulted in the resignation of nearly a hundred key members that opposed the former Batista supporters joining the guerrilla army. The lower morale and lack of cohesiveness was never reported back to Washington, and preparations and training for the amphibious invasion continued.¹³⁷ Once again, Bissel and Dulles only proceeded as ambitiously as they did because they were under the impression that President-elect Kennedy supported the plan to overthrow Castro at all costs. Had Kennedy voiced concern at the earlier meeting regarding attribution to the U.S. or direct

¹³⁴ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the President*, 46.

¹³⁵ Lyman B. Kirkpatrick, *Inspector General's Survey of the Cuban Operation and Associated Documents*, CIA Historical Review Program, <http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB341/IGrpt1.pdf>, 143.

¹³⁶ The CIA's original operation involved recruiting agents that had originally opposed Batista and also fell out of favor with Castro because those agents had already formed an anti-Castro underground movement in Havana. When expanding the operation and size of the army, the CIA recruited all anti-Castro Cubans they could find to include members that supported Batista and fought in his military. This led to strife and distrust between the two sides in the training camps in Guatemala. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 227–229.

¹³⁷ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 233–238.

U.S. involvement, Bissel and Dulles could have proceeded in a manner more likely to succeed under the new administration.

President Kennedy convened the first meeting regarding the plans for Cuba on January 28, 1961.¹³⁸ According to Schlesinger, this meeting came six days after DCI Dulles and General Lemnitzer, speaking on behalf of the JCS, introduced the plan to key members of Kennedy's administration. The CIA's plan at the time of Kennedy's meeting involved Cuban exiles, being trained in Guatemala by U.S. forces, invading Cuba to overthrow Castro, followed by a group of Cuban politicians favorable to the U.S. being flown from Florida to Cuba to run the country. At the brief, Kennedy remained skeptical and did not offer much of a reaction. Instead, Kennedy instructed the Defense Department to evaluate the feasibility of the CIA's military concepts and the State Department to develop method of economically isolating Cuba with the assistance of the Organization of American States (OAS).¹³⁹ Most importantly, however, President Kennedy reemphasized the ground rule that the plan must exclude overt U.S. involvement. The JCS reviewed the plan calling for the amphibious landing near Trinidad, Cuba,¹⁴⁰ and concluded that the plan had a fair chance of success; however that assessment excluded an earlier note that the plan would only succeed with a sizable uprising on the island or external support.¹⁴¹ By the time the failed invasion commenced, all of Kennedy's key advisers, the JCS, and high ranking officials within the CIA were all apprised of the plan. Despite reservations in each group, nobody voiced their concerns to the president. The reports that did forecast the failure, such as the memo from the

¹³⁸ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 46.

¹³⁹ The OAS is a regional organization that includes the 35 independent states of the Americas that was formed in 1948 based on the pillars of democracy, human rights, security, and development. The U.S. leveraged the OAS in an effort to topple Castro's government as well as to enforce the quarantine of Cuba during the Missile Crisis. OAS, "Who We Are," *OAS: More Rights for more People*, retrieved from: http://www.oas.org/en/about/who_we_are.asp.

¹⁴⁰ Trinidad was chosen due to its proximity to mountains. The original plan called for the landing in Trinidad because if conventional tactics failed to defeat Castro's army, the guerillas could retreat to the mountains to conduct guerrilla warfare. Furthermore, Trinidad was a large population center the guerillas could target for inciting rebellion. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 250.

¹⁴¹ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 238–39; Kirkpatrick, *Inspector General's Survey of the Cuban Operation*, 22–23.

Defense Department noting the necessity of external assistance or the CIA's intelligence estimate concluding that Cubans were unlikely to rebel, never reached the president for consideration. These instances of miscommunication leading up to the commencement of the failed invasion demonstrate the impact the poor relationship had during the planning phase.

2. Faulty Assumptions and Micro-Managerial Planning

After months of the Central Intelligence Agency's free reign during the transition period, as the operation's date of execution approached, President Kennedy took an active managerial role in the planning. That coupled Dulles's inaccurate statements regarding Cuban popular sentiment, Castro's military strength, the capabilities of the paramilitary force, and Kennedy's willingness to commit U.S. forces to ensure success, doomed the operation and resulted in catastrophic failure. At the heart of these issues was the continued miscommunication between the president and the DCI because, as Warner states in regards to planning, "they assumed they spoke the same language with regard to Cuba, but they actually were imprisoned by mutually exclusive misconceptions about the invasions likely outcome."¹⁴²

As the Bay of Pigs invasion operation approached, President Kennedy took a more active role in planning the operation with the intent to limit American culpability by changing the landing point and authorizations for military support. Based on the National Security Archive's chronology of events, at a meeting on March 11, 1961, Bissell presented the plan involving a combined amphibious and airborne assault to seize and hold a beachhead near Trinidad, Cuba. Kennedy, however, rejected the plan as too spectacular. As a result, Bissell was left searching for a new beach to seize and settled on the Zapata plan that called for a smaller invasion at the Bay of Pigs. Kennedy then made additional modifications to give the illusion that rebellion was an inside guerrilla type

¹⁴² Michael Warner, "The CIA's Internal Probe of the Bay of Pigs Affair: Lessons Unlearned," *Central Intelligence Agency*, https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/winter98_99/art08.html#rft2.

operation.¹⁴³ The JCS reviewed these modifications and concluded that they were unlikely to have the same chance of success as an invasion at Trinidad. Furthermore, Dulles and Bissell were aware that the changes reduced the chance of success, but the lack of communication and their blind support for the policy, prevented them from voicing concerns to the president. This demonstrates the importance of communication and a positive relationship because, had the DCI better understood the president and his hesitancy to risk U.S. troops, he may have been more willing to voice concerns regarding the chance of success. Instead, Dulles continued to push the plan.

Although DCI Dulles was aware that the landing of the exiles would not set off a spontaneous uprising, he also knew that the Joint Chiefs of Staff and president's approval of the plan hinged on the belief of an uprising. According to Schlesinger, the president and JCS assumed that a successful occupation would encourage the organized, armed Cuban resistance fighters to rebel.¹⁴⁴ When questioned about the possibilities of an uprising in early April, instead of communicating the CIA assessment discounting the possibility of an uprising, Dulles and Bissel stated that the internal resistance had 2500 members, sympathizers numbered near 20,000, and the exiles, once established on the beachhead, could expect active assistance from nearly a quarter of the Cuban population.¹⁴⁵

This intentionally deceptive statement illuminates two key factors regarding the relationship between President Kennedy and Director Dulles: first, it shows the importance of having a non-political DCI focused on supporting the president instead of a DCI focused on a specific policy action. As noted in Kirkpatrick's IG Survey, "there was failure at high levels to concentrate informed, unwavering scrutiny on the project and to apply experienced, *unbiased judgement* to the menacing situations that developed."¹⁴⁶ Dulles was so focused on ensuring the operation was executed that he failed to provide an

¹⁴³ National Security Archive, "Bay of Pigs: 40 Years After – Chronology," *The National Security Archive*, <http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/bayofpigs/chron.html>.

¹⁴⁴ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 247.

¹⁴⁵ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 247.

¹⁴⁶ Kirkpatrick, *Inspector General's Survey of the Cuban Operation*, 35. Emphasis added.

honest assessment of its chance for success. In fact, Dulles emphasized that executing the operation was the only method of ending it because if Kennedy chose not to go through with it, they would have to address the problem of disbanding the trained exiles in Guatemala.¹⁴⁷ Second, it demonstrates the importance of trust and honest communication in the relationship. Kennedy was more and more hesitant to go through with the operation as the execution date approached, but never communicated his hesitancy to Dulles. As a result, Dulles felt as though President Kennedy was fully committed to seeing the operation succeed under any circumstances. In fact, one of the key general assumptions of the plan was that Kennedy would authorize the landing of Marines to finish Castro if the exile brigade appeared to be failing.¹⁴⁸ This faulty assumption on the basis of poor communication resulted in Dulles exaggerating the chances of operational success because he was counting on Kennedy's willingness to commit troops. A better relationship with honest communication would have alleviated these faulty assumptions, and the failed invasion at the Bay of Pigs could have been successful or not attempted.

3. Execution and Fallout

With regard to Cuba, President Kennedy entered the office at a disadvantage. Instead of being able to explore multiple courses of action, decide upon, and execute the one that best suited his policy agenda, he had the choice to invade Cuba or not because Eisenhower's plan had already been devoted copious resources and time.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, Bissel and Dulles were actively advocating for the plan in development, and, as far as Kennedy knew, the JCS were in agreement that it was an effective course of action. As a result, Kennedy, despite personal concerns, ordered the invasion of Cuba on April 17, 1961, bowing to pressure from the president of Guatemala and CIA.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 242.

¹⁴⁸ Warner, "The CIA's Internal Probe of the Bay of Pigs Affair," np.

¹⁴⁹ Vandenbroucke, "Anatomy of a Failure," 473.

¹⁵⁰ The Cuban exiles were drawing attention in Guatemala, and the rainy season was about to start. To avoid another year in Guatemala, the President was pressing Kennedy to authorize the invasion or disband the unit. The CIA was pressing Kennedy to authorize the invasion sooner instead of later because they assessed the Soviets were preparing to ship fighter jets and rockets to Cuba. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*,

The events of the invasion are summarized in Schlesinger's work as well as Kirkpatrick's survey, with very few differences. An airstrike scheduled for the night of April 16 was unable to launch due heavy haze over the airfield, preventing the destruction of Castro's air force, but at this point, it was too late to stop the invasion force.¹⁵¹ Cuban underwater demolitions teams landed on two of the three beaches chosen for the invasion in the early morning hours of April 17 to mark the beaches for the main invasion force. As they landed, they were almost immediately engaged by Castro's militia. The underwater demolitions teams were able to quickly defeat the militiamen, but not before the militia alerted the rest of Castro's forces. This enabled the Cuban air force, which was more capable than previously assessed, to engage the landing forces, the naval support vessels, and the Cuban exiles' B-26 air force. In doing so, Castro's air force sank the supply ship carrying the ammunition reserve for the following ten days, wreaked havoc on the landing forces, and quickly destroyed half of the B-26s. The alert also allowed Castro to dispatch tanks more quickly than the invasion planners assessed to counter the invading forces. Despite early conflict, many of the forces made it ashore and fought valiantly for the next three days, inflicting heavy casualties on Castro's forces. However, with the loss of the supply ship and lack of additional resources or assistance from the United States, the invading exiles ran out of ammunition and were forced to surrender or flee for their lives, ending the invasion. Those that fled were unable to cross the 80 miles necessary to reach the Escambray Mountains due to the swampy interior of the country, thus ending the opportunity for guerrilla warfare and ending the invasion. Furthermore, the invasion failed to spark an internal rebellion because Castro's police force arrested anybody assumed to have connections to the underground to include 200,000 people in Havana.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Kirkpatrick, *Inspector General's Survey of the Cuban Operation*, 28.

¹⁵² Kirkpatrick, *Inspector General's Survey of the Cuban Operation*, 30–33; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 274–281.

American culpability in the failed invasion was undeniable, internationally and domestically. Khrushchev immediately sent a diplomatic message denouncing the invasion and pledging all necessary support to Castro.¹⁵³ The American public was equally as outraged. According to Schlesinger, in an open letter to Kennedy, Harvard historian, H. Stuart Hughes and seventy other academicians accused Kennedy of driving Cuba into an even stronger alliance with the Soviet Union. Students launched protests on a dozen campuses across the country, and a “Fair Play for Cuba Rally” in New York attracted nearly three thousand people.¹⁵⁴ Kennedy realized that the failure was avoidable, and took away the following lesson learned: “an intelligence failure had led to bad advice, which in turn prompted a bad decision.”¹⁵⁵

D. THE RELATIONSHIP CHANGES

Following the failure of the operation at the Bay of Pigs, President Kennedy was forced to reevaluate his relationship with the Intelligence Community, prompting his infamous comment to Bissel, “In a parliamentary government, I’d have to resign. But in this government I can’t, so you and Allen have to go.”¹⁵⁶ This led to a change of leadership and a change in the way the president received intelligence. The implementation of these changes allowed for the IC to serve an integral role in the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The leadership change in the Intelligence Community involved the resignation of Dulles and Bissel and the appointment of John McCone as DCI. In appointing McCone, Kennedy no longer had to rely on an adviser kept on from the previous administration, but instead had somebody that he trusted and that fit his administration’s needs. According to Schlesinger, one of the major lessons Kennedy learned from the failed

¹⁵³ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 275.

¹⁵⁴ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 285–286.

¹⁵⁵ Priess, *The President’s Book of Secrets*, 17.

¹⁵⁶ Chris Matthews, *Jack Kennedy: Elusive Hero*, New York: Simon and Schuster (2012), 332.

invasion at the Bay of Pigs was that he placed too much trust in experts “whose primary loyalty was not to him or his administration.” Instead, he realized that he needed to use the people he had brought to government with him that he trusted.¹⁵⁷ In this case, that meant replacing Dulles with McCone. Dulles complied with Kennedy’s resignation request but continued to serve until Kennedy named McCone as his successor in December 1961.¹⁵⁸

John McCone was picked as the Dulles’s successor as DCI, not based on previous experience with President Kennedy’s administration or the Intelligence Community, but for McCone’s honesty and ability to manage. Unlike President Eisenhower, Kennedy and his staff preferred to digest intelligence on their own, and needed “a sensible and subdued manager of the government’s intelligence business,” as opposed to Dulles’s “authoritative interpreter of the flow of intelligence,” style needed by Eisenhower.¹⁵⁹ McCone, a Republican from California, had the reputation of being a stubborn cold-warrior; but with his cautious and realistic approach of Agency imitations, and the help of Richard Helms and Ray Cline as his deputies, McCone repaired the morale and reputation of the CIA. McCone was also willing to work with Kennedy’s staff to figure out a new way to support the president, appointing his Deputy of Current Intelligence to develop the product that would serve as the way forward.

The appointment of DCI McCone marked a significant milestone in President Kennedy’s efforts to repair his relationship with the Intelligence Community. McCone was a man Kennedy trusted and a man that would have access to Kennedy, unlike Dulles. This face to face interaction was essential in the IC’s understanding of the president’s direction on foreign policy which in turn allowed them to provide unbiased information on those subjects to ensure the president was as informed as possible. Furthermore, McCone recognized that he was not the expert so McCone frequently called on the

¹⁵⁷ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 296.

¹⁵⁸ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 50.

¹⁵⁹ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 428.

experts to brief their intelligence while McCone provided objective criticism to alleviate biases, as will be discussed in more detail when evaluating the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Priess provides insights into the changes in how President Kennedy received intelligence, unintentionally illustrating Kennedy's recognition of the necessity for change and receptivity to instituting those changes. After the fiasco at the Bay of Pigs, National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy vented to Kennedy about the way he received intelligence and used his staff. In doing so, Bundy noted that it was impossible to get the president to sit still for more than eight minutes each morning for national security discussions to include an intelligence brief, and that needed to change for the president to be successful in forming foreign policy. He went on to recommend that the president set aside real, scheduled time each day for discussion and action. He also encouraged the president to receive an intelligence brief from a professional CIA officer at least three times a week.¹⁶⁰

Although President Kennedy did not immediately institute all of the changes National Security Adviser Bundy proposed, Kennedy was receptive to the feedback and commissioned his senior military aide Chester Clifton to find a solution. Clifton approached the Director of Current Intelligence, Huntington Sheldon and senior analyst Dick Lehman and instructed them to "produce a product with everything that required the president's attention."¹⁶¹ On June 15, 1961, Clifton asked Sheldon and Lehman to produce a short document absent of bureaucratic prose, jargon, and classification markers that the president could fold up and carry in his breast pocket throughout the day to read when he had time.¹⁶² Within 24 hours, Lehman and Sheldon developed a dry run of President's Intelligence Checklist (PICL) for Clifton's approval. Clifton signed off on Lehman's product, and on June 17, 1961, the first PICL, a seven-page 8.5 by 8 inch

¹⁶⁰ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 19–20.

¹⁶¹ Celia Mansfield, "From the Pickle Factory to the President's Daily Brief," *The President's Daily Brief: Delivering Intelligence to Kennedy and Johnson*, Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 6.

¹⁶² Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 20–21.

booklet consisting of 14 intelligence highlights, was delivered to President Kennedy at his home.¹⁶³ By happenstance, Sheldon's three superiors were out of town at the time which allowed him to deliver the first PICL directly to President Kennedy the next day without intervention or edits from his superiors.¹⁶⁴ By the time Sheldon informed them, President Kennedy had already received two PICLs and was impressed with the product, preventing any chance of killing or changing the project.¹⁶⁵

The PICL was a significant change because it provided a method, to which Kennedy was receptive, that communicated the most sensitive, important intelligence highlights to the president. In addition to reading the PICL daily, it also served as a method for the president to provide feedback to the IC and alert them to his concerns because Kennedy would write comments on it and request amplifying information. Clifton noted that the PICL "was considered by the president as a daily communication between the DCI and the president's office."¹⁶⁶ Because the PICL succeeded at delivering information to the president as well as provide feedback to the IC, it served as the first successful method of communication between the president and the IC.

The improved communication and improved personal chemistry between the DCI and President Kennedy was made possible by Kennedy's receptivity to change after being prompted by a major failure. The changes resulted in an improved working relationship between the IC and president, which proved important for in the fall of 1962 when Soviet missiles were discovered in Cuba.

E. THE SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION OF THE MISSILE CRISIS

President Kennedy was once again forced to deal with Cuba when the Intelligence Community alerted him to the presence of Soviet military shipments to Cuba. Initially,

¹⁶³ Mansfield, "From the Pickle Factory," 6.

¹⁶⁴ At the time, Sheldon's superiors included Bissel and Dulles, who were both on their way out due to the failed invasion at the Bay of Pigs.

¹⁶⁵ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 22–23.

¹⁶⁶ As quoted from Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 34.

the IC, with the exception of DCI McCone, assessed that Khrushchev would only send defensive weapons to Cuba because the weapons were justified for Castro's survival based on previous U.S. facilitated invasion and overthrow attempts.¹⁶⁷ McCone, on the other hand, briefly contemplated and vocalized an assessment stating Khrushchev would ship offensive nuclear capabilities to Cuba as well, but not with enough conviction to overturn the popular opposing sentiment.¹⁶⁸ The popular sentiment quickly changed on October 14, 1962 when processed U-2 photography revealed launch pads designed for ballistic missiles as well as a single missile on the ground in San Cristóbal.¹⁶⁹

While the secret arrival of missiles in Cuba was a failure of the Intelligence Community to collect information, the resolution of the crisis without a military strike was a brilliant success for President Kennedy's administration and would not have been possible without support and communication from the IC. DCI McCone was an active participant of the Executive Committee (ExComm), had regular contact with the president, and used those briefings to provide the president with information without pushing a political agenda. The change in Kennedy's mentality regarding the reception of advice was also instrumental in facilitating effective communication with all of ExComm to include DCI McCone. Finally, a recently declassified letter from Kennedy to the DCI McCone proves that Kennedy felt as though the IC was instrumental in the peaceful resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Improved communication between the president and Intelligence Community, and a strong IC presence at the Executive Committee of the National Security Council meetings was instrumental in the de-escalation and peaceful resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis when compared to the interactions that occurred during the planning of the Bay of Pigs Invasion. ExComm had strong intelligence representation which facilitated the dissemination of unbiased intelligence to ensure the committee, and ultimately

¹⁶⁷ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 797–799

¹⁶⁸ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 799

¹⁶⁹ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 801.

President Kennedy, was as informed as possible in deliberating and deciding the best course of action for resolving the Cuban Missile Crisis. In addition to the DCI McCone, Arthur Lundahl, who was Director of the National Photographic Interpretation Center, and Sidney Graybeal, the Chief of the CIA's Offensive Missile Division, routinely attended ExComm meetings to elaborate on collected intelligence and Soviet capabilities.¹⁷⁰ This contrasts with meetings regarding the Bay of Pigs invasion in two notable ways: first, the DCI was not pushing policy agenda through the use of his own assessments even though McCone initially favored the idea of military intervention.¹⁷¹ Instead, DCI McCone called in the specialists to brief their specific fields, enabling the IC to provide more accurate, timely, unbiased assessments because the individual members kept each other in check. This bolstered the trust from the remaining members of ExComm, to include the president, and enabled them to use the provided information to form and debate multiple policy options from limited diplomatic pressure to a full scale military invasion.¹⁷² Second, unlike the planning meetings for the Bay of Pigs invasion, President Kennedy questioned reporting, asked questions, and requested additional information. This illustrates the improvement in communication between the president and IC when compared to the failed invasion at the Bay of Pigs because during those meetings, Kennedy listened but kept his reservations and questions to himself. The questions and requests for additional information aided the president in ruling out military strike options because the military and IC could not guarantee that all missile sites would be destroyed. Revelations in later years indicated that this was the correct call because the IC failed to locate or even realize the presence of tactical nuclear missiles that were operational before October 1962 that would have been used on invading U.S.

¹⁷⁰ Marshall Carter, "Memorandum for the Record, 17 October 1962," *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis: 1962*, ed. Mary S. McAuliffe, (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, October 1992), 146–147.

¹⁷¹ Michael B. Petersen, *Legacy of Ashes, Trial by Fire: The Origins of the Defense Intelligence Agency and the Cuban Missile Crisis Crucible*, (Washington, DC: Defense Intelligence Agency, 2011), 20.

¹⁷² Carter, "Memorandum for Record," 145–146.

forces.¹⁷³ Without that effective communication and trusting relationship, Kennedy may have authorized the military invasion of Cuba, possibly starting a thermo-nuclear war.

President Kennedy was also more receptive to advice after the early failure. Instead of relying on single sources of assurance, Kennedy wanted everybody's opinion. Robert Kennedy noted that the Cuban Missile Crisis was successfully resolved because ExComm had time to debate and present differing opinions and options to President Kennedy, whereas during the Bay of Pigs, the illusion of unanimity existed because those who opposed the plan did not voice their concerns.¹⁷⁴ Additionally, prior to any action being taken, President Kennedy wanted to know all possible implications of the action, as Robert Kennedy noted, "again and again he [President Kennedy] emphasized that we must understand the implications of every step. What response could we anticipate? What were the implications for us?"¹⁷⁵ This also contrasted sharply with the planning sessions leading up to the failed Bay of Pigs invasion because although many key staff members were apprehensive about the plan, none wanted to voice their concerns to the new president. President Kennedy was also apprehensive about the plan, but authorized the ill-fated invasion to commence based on the perceived support from his advisers, whereas during the deliberations for the best course of action regarding Cuban missiles, Kennedy was insistent on hearing all objections to each plan, focusing on the second, third, and fourth order effects.¹⁷⁶

The final piece of evidence supporting the significance the change of relationship had in the successful resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis can be seen in a letter President Kennedy drafted to DCI McCone following the ordeal. On January 9, 1963, President Kennedy had a letter delivered to DCI McCone commending the IC's part in the resolution of the crisis. Of note, Kennedy remarked, "the fact that we had timely and accurate information, skillfully analyzed and clearly presented, to guide us in our

¹⁷³ Petersen, *Legacy of Ashes, Trial by Fire*, 16.

¹⁷⁴ Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*, 112.

¹⁷⁵ Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*, 99.

¹⁷⁶ Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*, 99.

judgements during the crisis is, I believe, the greatest tribute to the effectiveness of these individuals and agencies.”¹⁷⁷ This remark illustrates the value of McCone’s approach to presenting information to the president because, Kennedy noted the information guided the policymakers in their decision instead of pushing for a specific policy regarding the missiles in Cuba. The importance the IC played in the successful de-escalation was also noted when Kennedy wrote, “the magnitude of their contribution can be measured, in part, by the fact that the peace was sustained during a most critical time.”¹⁷⁸

F. ANALYSIS AND IMPACTS OF THE RELATIONSHIP

“But no one can doubt that failure in Cuba in 1961 contributed to success in Cuba in 1962.”¹⁷⁹ This concluding line from Schlesinger’s chapter on the Cuban Missile Crisis from his book *A Thousand Days* most accurately captures the sentiment of this thesis chapter. The evolution of the support the IC provided to President Kennedy clearly shows that a poor relationship led to a massive intelligence failure that then served as the catalyst to force changes, which in turn led to a great relationship and subsequent success. The Bay of Pigs Invasion led to the firing of DCI Dulles, appointment of John McCone, and reform on how President Kennedy received his intelligence. As a result, communication between the IC and Kennedy flourished, allowing for the successful resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The failed invasion at the Bay of Pigs and planning process leading up to it also demonstrates the danger of the IC pursuing policy objectives instead of providing information.

Finally, Kennedy’s presidency demonstrates that a poor early relationship does not have to remain poor. Dulles, the CIA, and the IC had a great relationship with Eisenhower, working through the NSC meetings. That was not the case with Kennedy; fortunately, Sheldon saved the relationship with the creation of the PICL. The IC and

¹⁷⁷ John F. Kennedy, *Letter to DCI John McCone*, January 9, 1963, https://twitter.com/CIA/status/922905634437296129/photo/1?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cia.gov%2Flibrary%2Fintelligence-literature%2Findex.html

¹⁷⁸ Kennedy, *Letter to DCI McCone*, np.

¹⁷⁹ Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 297.

Kennedy's failure at the Bay of Pigs brought to light the need for a change in the relationship as well as the method of communication between the president and IC. Furthermore, President Kennedy agreed that a change needed to happen and was receptive to the idea. As a result of that change, Kennedy averted a nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and "the relationship with Kennedy was not only a distinct improvement over the more formal relationship with Eisenhower, but would only rarely be matched in future administrations."¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 50.

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IV. GEORGE H. W. BUSH: A TALE OF SUCCESS

A. INTRODUCTION

George H. W. Bush¹⁸¹ entered his Presidency with a better understanding of the role, responsibilities, capabilities, and limitations of the Intelligence Community than any president before him or after him, because he had served as President Ford's DCI, from January 20, 1976 until March 9, 1977.¹⁸² This made him the first and only president to be both a producer and a consumer of the highest intelligence products in the country.¹⁸³ During his short time as DCI, Bush developed a deep understanding of the significance of DCI access to the president because his access enabled him to directly resolve disputes with Ford's Cabinet members without being pushed around. The relationship he had with Ford allowed that access. Bush took this lesson to heart and, as president, applied it to his own DCI, William Webster.

Whereas the previous chapter discussed the repercussions of a presidency beginning with a poor relationship with the Intelligence Community, this chapter examines the results of a president who began his term with a strong working relationship with the Intelligence Community. George H.W. Bush was chosen for this because, like John Kennedy, Bush became president while a plan was being developed to depose a world leader. For Kennedy, that was the failed Bay of Pigs invasion to remove Castro. Bush entered office during the midst of planning to oust and arrest Panamanian de facto ruler Manuel Noriega. Unlike Kennedy, however, Bush witnessed success in his operation, indicating that a positive relationship between the president and IC is more

¹⁸¹ For the duration of this chapter, the use of the name "Bush" or title "President Bush" will be in reference to President George H.W. Bush, not his son, President George W. Bush.

¹⁸² Douglas F. Garthoff, *Directors of Central Intelligence as Leaders of the U.S. Intelligence Community 1946–2005* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005), 311.

¹⁸³ Douglas F. Garthoff, *Directors of Central*, 311.

likely to result in operational and intelligence successes.¹⁸⁴ This thesis chapter will show that a successful operation further strengthens the relationship between the president and IC, which then contributed to additional successes, in the form of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

B. LESSONS LEARNED AS DCI

According to Priess, when President Ford asked George H.W. Bush to accept the DCI position, Bush was initially very hesitant. At the time of being asked, he was serving as the de facto ambassador to China following a two-year stint as the ambassador to the UN. Those two positions had sparked a desire to pursue a career in international politics. Additionally, Bush knew the DCI was an apolitical position, so, he thought taking the position would be political suicide—an outcome for which he was unprepared. In fact, his Senate confirmation hinged on a promise that Bush would not pursue a presidential or vice presidential bid in the 1976 election. Bush's father, however, taught Bush that service to his country was of the highest calling. As a result, he could not turn down the president's request, stating that, "if this is what the President [sic] wants me to do the answer is a firm 'YES.'"¹⁸⁵ In accepting the position, Bush placed his political career on hold, but service as DCI benefited him immensely later when he was elected president.

George H. W. Bush's tenure as DCI from January 1976 until January 1977, enabled him to form a strong relationship with the Intelligence Community during his presidency because it gave him a fundamental understanding of how the Intelligence Community functioned. While serving as DCI, Bush had an opportunity to become familiar with intelligence products. Serving as DCI also enabled him to learn the importance of the DCI's access to the president and the importance of the president's feedback to the IC. Finally, because he was the DCI, Bush understood the importance of the position, so, as president, he ensured he had the right man in the job. He took all of

¹⁸⁴ The author recognizes that factors other than the President's relationship with the IC contributed to the successes discussed in this chapter. Because impact of the relationship is the focus of the thesis and time restraints prevent investigating additional factors, this chapter focuses solely on the contribution of the relationship for the successes.

¹⁸⁵ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 99–100.

these lessons learned from his time as DCI into the White House when he was inaugurated as president.

As DCI, Bush became intimately familiar with the intelligence products available to the president, and, more specifically, the significance of having briefers deliver the PDB. Bush was not an intelligence professional, so upon taking the appointment, he focused on administrative aspects of the job instead of intelligence analysis.¹⁸⁶ As a result, he did not contribute to, brief, or edit the PDB because he wanted to avoid the appearance of politicization of intelligence.¹⁸⁷ He did, however, obtain familiarity with the product because he read it daily on his way to Langley, and on occasion, briefed it to the NSC so the president received Bush's analysis as well.¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, although daily PDB briefings had dropped off, Bush saw how important it was to have intelligence analysts deliver briefs to Ford at his weekly meeting with Bush because "the president was better off...hearing directly from the ... experts than listening to him try to effectively convey their content."¹⁸⁹ This was another lesson he took with him to the Oval Office. According to Priess, Bush stated, "one of my favorite times of day was when I would sit down with a briefer and read through the PDB."¹⁹⁰ Bush went on to explain the importance of the brief: not only did the briefer provide amplifying information that helped Bush make decisions, it also helped the officers that worked on the book because they knew that their work was being read by the president every day, and the questions Bush asked during the briefings helped guide the writers to focus on what he needed, but did not yet know.¹⁹¹ Because he was the editor of the PDB and the

¹⁸⁶ Stafford T. Thomas, "Presidential Styles and DCI Selection," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 7, no. 2 (1994): 196, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08850609408435245>.

¹⁸⁷ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 102.

¹⁸⁸ "Bush as Director of Central Intelligence," Central Intelligence Agency, January 29, 2016, <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/featured-story-archive/2016-featured-story-archive/bush-as-director-of-central-intelligence.html>; Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 102.

¹⁸⁹ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 103.

¹⁹⁰ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 167.

¹⁹¹ George H.W. Bush, Foreword to *The President's Book of Secrets*, by David Priess (New York: Public Affairs, 2016: vi-viii; Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 167-168.

community manager for the IC, Bush had the chance to witness firsthand the how much reporting was screened and sifted through to find PDB articles. He understood how much work went into each edition of the PDB, and as a result, gave it, and the people that produced it, the respect and recognition they deserved.

Before even accepting the DCI position, Bush realized the importance of the DCI's access to the president. In fact, one of his three conditions for accepting the appointment was "free and direct access to the president."¹⁹² Even though the Republican party was advising Ford to put distance between himself and the CIA for political reasons, Ford accepted and honored this agreement with Bush. The access came in the form of a weekly Thursday or Friday meeting in the Oval Office along with National Security Adviser Scowcroft, assuming the men were in DC.¹⁹³ Bush viewed these meetings as a chance to show off the Agency's capabilities as well as get analysts and experts in front of the president so they could see that their hard work was valued at the highest level.¹⁹⁴ This simple action contributed significantly to the bolstering of morale in the CIA, which in turn, improved the quality of their output. This serves as another lesson learned early that he capitalized on once becoming president.

Bush's time as DCI gave him insight into how significant the position is and the importance of having a good leader with a personality compatible with the president—lessons he took with him into the presidency. Bush was confirmed as DCI at a time when the IC, more specifically the CIA, was under an immense amount of congressional and public scrutiny for past covert operations and domestic surveillance operations. Bush had just accepted the position when the discussed Pike and Church Committees' reports were released..¹⁹⁵ As a result, morale was low at the agency as was public opinion of the IC. Bush's strong leadership was responsible for improving morale and implementing

¹⁹² Garthoff, *Directors of Central Intelligence*, 112.

¹⁹³ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 102.

¹⁹⁴ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 103

¹⁹⁵ "Bush as Director of Central Intelligence."

Executive Orders that increased oversight of the IC without bruising egos.¹⁹⁶ Bush skillfully navigated between political tension between the IC and Congress to implement desired changes in oversight while maintaining the trust and respect of the IC.

Because Bush was a strong leader that had regular access to the president, he was in a position to preserve CIA responsibilities and authorities in the aftermath of the Pike and Church committees. According to Priess, early in Bush's time as DCI, McMahon approached Bush warning that the Department of State and Department of Defense began to encroach on Agency prerogatives. Bush immediately picked up the phone to discuss the matter with Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld. After a couple minutes of small talk, Bush asked Rumsfeld if he would take care of it, or if the two of them should "go see Jerry," in reference to President Gerald Ford. Rumsfeld agreed to handle the matter, ending attempted power grabs following the damaging reports.¹⁹⁷ This occasion further instilled in Bush the importance of having a DCI that is a strong leader, willing to confront other powerful government members, as well as the necessity of access and a good relationship with the president. Furthermore, David Robarge pointed out that "Presidents often have had unrealistic expectations about what the Central Intelligence Agency can achieve operationally and analytically, and they usually did not appreciate hearing from their directors that the world was more complicated and uncertain than they had anticipated."¹⁹⁸ But, because Bush served as DCI, he entered the presidency with realistic expectations that helped him form a strong working relationship with the IC.

Bush's term as DCI came to an abrupt end, however, with the election and inauguration of President Jimmy Carter. Although Carter thought Bush handled the reforms at the CIA well, he thought Bush was too political and loyal to the Republican

¹⁹⁶ "Bush as Director of Central Intelligence."

¹⁹⁷ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 101–102.

¹⁹⁸ David Robarge, "Leadership in an Intelligence Organization: The Directors of Central Intelligence and the CIA," in *The Oxford Handbook of National Security Intelligence*, ed. Loch K. Johnson (Oxford University Press, 2015), 487.

party¹⁹⁹ to serve in his administration.²⁰⁰ As a result, Bush resigned as DCI, and Admiral Stansfield Turner was sworn in on March 7, 1977.²⁰¹

C. VICE PRESIDENTIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH DCI

In addition to having previously served as DCI, Bush had the benefit of serving as vice president for the eight years leading up to his presidential election and inauguration. As vice president, Bush was well informed of ongoing plans. Additionally, following the abrupt death of DCI Bill Casey, Bush had the opportunity to influence President Reagan's choice for Casey's successor. Both the information obtained during his vice presidency and input on the selection William Webster as DCI, aided Bush in establishing an effective working relationship with the IC upon his inauguration as president.

Immediately following the 1980 election, President Carter authorized the distribution of the PDB to President-elect Reagan, as well as Vice President-elect, George H.W. Bush. This enabled Bush to reacquaint himself with the most vital, sensitive reporting in the United States. Because of his time as DCI, he also knew the importance of having a briefer present to go through the PDB, and convinced President-elect Reagan to accept a briefer as well.²⁰² This enabled Vice President Bush to become, and remain, apprised of foreign intelligence develops for the duration of his time as vice president. Priess notes that for the entire eight years of Bush's vice presidency, he insisted on having a "working-level" briefer with him when he reviewed the PDB. Additionally, after Bush had reviewed the document, he would then head to the Oval Office to attend President Reagan's briefing.²⁰³ Receiving the PDB was instrumental in Bush's formation of a good relationship with the IC for a few reasons. First, it allowed him to remain up to

¹⁹⁹ Prior to his confirmation as DCI, Bush was serving as the Chairman of the Republican Party, and Carter viewed his election as the public's way of saying they were tired of Republican rule. Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 98.

²⁰⁰ "Bush as Director of Central Intelligence."

²⁰¹ Garthoff, *Directors of Central Intelligence*, 312.

²⁰² Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 129–130.

²⁰³ Priess, *the President's Book of Secrets*, 135–137.

date on foreign intelligence. As a result, he was not surprised when the situation in Panama deteriorated, and he was involved in the initial contingency planning for Panama that began in 1988.²⁰⁴ Furthermore, Bush remained apprised of the Iran-Iraq War, the results of which, would have a substantial impact on his presidency.²⁰⁵

The other significant impact Bush's Vice Presidency had on the formation of his presidential relationship with the Intelligence Community was his advice in naming DCI Bill Casey's successor. Casey's Deputy Director of Intelligence, Robert Gates, was Reagan's first choice to replace Casey, however, after allegations of involvement in the Iran-Contra Scandal,²⁰⁶ Gates withdrew from the nomination.²⁰⁷ According to Garthoff, following Gates's withdrawal, Bush recommended FBI Director William Webster to Reagan as a worthy DCI nominee. This was significant because Webster had a similar personality as Bush and approached the job of DCI in a similar way. Webster focused first on rebuilding the Agency's image in the eyes of Congress and the public following the Iran-Contra Affair and allegations of the politicization of intelligence, just like Bush did following the Pike and Church Committees' reports. Furthermore, Webster, like Bush, was not a career intelligence officer, and therefore, refrained from providing substantial inputs to the PDB, helping to alleviate politicization rumors.²⁰⁸ Because Bush had such a significant role in naming Casey's replacement, he effectively started his presidency with his own nominee, which aided in the immediate establishment of a positive relationship with the IC. This also contrasts sharply with Kennedy, who entered office with a fractured relationship with a DCI loyal to another party and administration.

²⁰⁴ Ronald H. Cole, *Operation Just Cause: The Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Panama February 1988- January 1990* (Washington, DC: Joint History Office, 1995), 7–8.

²⁰⁵ Preiss, *The President's book of Secrets*, 136.

²⁰⁶ The Iran-Contra affair was a covert action in which members of Reagan's national security council sold antitank and antiaircraft missiles to Iran in an effort to secure the release of American hostages being held in Lebanon. A portion of the funds were then diverted to support the Contras who were fighting the Marxist-oriented Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Roland Matthews and others, "Iran-Contra Affair," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed November 5, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Iran-Contra-Affair>.

²⁰⁷ Garthoff, *Directors of Central Intelligence*, 168.

²⁰⁸ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 143–144; Garthoff, *Directors of Central Intelligence*, 171–173.

D. EARLY PRESIDENCY

President Bush took office with a strong, working relationship with the DCI, and Intelligence Community as a whole, because he implemented the lessons learned from his time as DCI and vice president. He used face to face briefings with written feedback on the PDBs to ensure he had good communication with the IC. He also ensured he had a non-political appointee with a compatible personality as his DCI. Finally, his time as vice president was significant because he was apprised of covert action and contingency plans regarding Panama and was familiar with the progression and end of the Iran-Iraq War. These actions enabled him to establish an environment in which his relationship with the IC could flourish.

Bush remarked that nearly every day of his presidency, he had a Central Intelligence Agency briefer sit with him as he read through the PDB to answer questions and elaborate on stories contained within. This, according to Bush, enriched his time with the PDB and aided him in making more informed decisions.²⁰⁹ This helped strengthen his relationship with the IC because it opened a channel of communication between the president and IC, providing insight into policy direction which allowed the IC to better support the president. Furthermore, it demonstrated to the analysts and producers that the president cared about their work and used it for policy decisions, which encouraged them to excel at their work.

As vice president, Bush had the opportunity to push his nomination for DCI. As a result, when he took office, Bush was working with a known commodity. DCI Webster was formerly the FBI director so Bush knew that he was apolitical. Furthermore, while serving Reagan, Webster declined a Cabinet-level position because he wanted to ensure that he was not viewed as a political figure.²¹⁰ As previously discussed, Webster also ran the IC much in the same manner as Bush, indicating very similar, compatible personalities. As a result, Bush entered his presidency well informed with a strong

²⁰⁹ Bush, "Foreword," viii.

²¹⁰ Garthoff, *Directors of Central Intelligence*, 171.

baseline relationship with the IC, enabling him to succeed early in his presidency when facing a crisis in Panama.

E. OPERATION JUST CAUSE

1. Background

The mid to late 1980s saw the problematic rise of Manuel Noriega in Panama following the death of Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF) Brigadier General Omar Torrijos. Noriega's ascension to power was ruthless, often stamping out opposition with violence.²¹¹ He veered Panama off its path toward democracy, and began establishing closer ties to Cuba, Libya, and Nicaragua.²¹² Furthermore, he established ties with the Medellín drug cartel in Colombia and was responsible for aiding the cartel in smuggling millions of dollars' worth of cocaine and marijuana into the United States.²¹³

As a result, Presidents Reagan and Bush made multiple attempts to use instruments of national power, short of military intervention, to remove Noriega. First, Reagan pleaded with Noriega to step down.²¹⁴ When Noriega refused, Reagan began, and Bush continued, applying economic pressure on Noriega, cutting financial and military aid to Panama.²¹⁵ Instead of forcing Noriega to step down, however, this exacerbated anti-American sentiments and sparked riots across the country. In addition to removing aid, Noriega was indicted on drug trafficking charges by federal grand juries in Tampa and Miami, carrying a sentence of over 100 years.²¹⁶ Once again, this failed to convince Noriega to step down. Instead, as tensions grew, Noriega stepped up harassment of

²¹¹ Cole, *Operation Just Cause*, 6.

²¹² Cole, *Operation Just Cause*, 6.

²¹³ Glenn J. Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era: How to Win America's Wars in the Twenty-First Century* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2010), 44, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ebook-nps/reader.action?docID=570388&ppg=12>.

²¹⁴ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 44.

²¹⁵ Jennifer Morrison Taw, *Operation Just Cause: Lessons for Operations Other Than War* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1996), 3; Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 44–45.

²¹⁶ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 43.

U.S. forces in Panama²¹⁷ and continued suppression political opposition. As Noriega became more defiant and non-military pressure failed to force Noriega to capitulate, Reagan and Bush determined that military force might be necessary and gave orders to commence planning.

In February 1988, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) began drafting contingency plans to protect U.S. personnel and property and plans to keep the Panama Canal open.²¹⁸ The initial plan involved a massive buildup of U.S. forces on U.S. bases in Panama in an effort to intimidate Noriega. These plans were in development throughout the 1988 presidential campaigns, and in January 1989, President Bush inherited the plans.

When President Bush took office, the situation was continuing to rapidly degrade in Panama, so Bush increased pressure on Noriega. Noriega's PDF was routinely harassing and assaulting U.S. military personnel and their families. Bush responded by ordering nearly constant readiness exercises for forces in and headed to Panama and continued the buildup of forces in the canal zone to intimidate Noriega to step down.²¹⁹ When that did not work, Bush authorized the release of \$10 million to support Noriega's political opposition in the 1989 Panamanian presidential election.²²⁰ When Noriega's hand-picked candidates were losing the election, Noriega's men removed and replaced tally sheets showing votes against his candidates.²²¹ The opposition candidate declared that he had won the presidency, appealed to the international community for assistance, and called for protests in the streets of Panama. Noriega responded by dispatching the PDF to forcefully quell the riots, and overturned the election results, declaring the

²¹⁷ As a part of the agreement following the U.S. completion of the canal in Panama in 1914, the U.S. controlled 5 miles on either side of the canal to ensure the safe passage of U.S. ships because it was of strategic importance. Cole, *Operation Just Cause*, 5.

²¹⁸ Cole, *Operation Just Cause*, 5.

²¹⁹ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 47.

²²⁰ Taw, *Lessons for Operations Other than War*, 5.

²²¹ Cole, *Operation Just Cause*, 10–11.

election invalid due to foreign interference.²²² Bush then authorized limited support for an attempted coup on October 3, 1989 in which a few members of the PDF turned on and captured Noriega. The coup failed, however, when rebels allowed Noriega to call his mistress who then called reinforcements loyal to Noriega. After hours of firefighting, Noriega loyalists defeated, arrested, tortured, and killed those responsible for the coup. Although the United States did not provide direct support for the coup, service members did block roads as requested by those responsible for the coup, further escalating tensions between Noriega and U.S. forces in Panama.²²³

In December 1989, the situation in Panama reached its flashpoint. As Cole explains, on December 15, the national council voted to put Panama in a state of war with the United States, and Noriega was named Maximum Leader. On December 16, PDF harassment of U.S. military personnel had gone too far. Four U.S. military officers refused to vacate their vehicle at a PDF checkpoint, at which time the PDF guard loaded his rifle. The U.S. soldiers sped away because of the hostile act. The PDF soldier fired at the fleeing car, wounding three of the officers. Marine Corps First Lieutenant Robert Paz was one of the injured and later died from the gunshot wounds. A U.S. naval officer and his wife witnessed the event, resulting in their being detained and assaulted. On December 17, President Bush was briefed of the events that occurred the day before, and after careful deliberations about the chance of the PDF seizing of U.S. hostages and other non-military options, Bush gave the order to execute BLUE SPOON, the contingency plan to remove Noriega.²²⁴

2. Execution

December 20, 1989, Operation Just Cause commenced with 27,000 U.S. troops invading Panama, from both the Canal Zone and in an airborne assault to, according to President Bush's speech to the nation, "safeguard the lives of Americans, to defend democracy in Panama, to combat drug trafficking, and to protect the integrity of the

²²² Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 46; Cole, *Operation Just Cause*, 2

²²³ Cole, *Operation Just Cause*, 14–16

²²⁴ Cole, *Operation Just Cause*, 27–29.

Panama Canal treaty.”²²⁵ Bush added to accomplish these objectives, Noriega must be detained and brought to justice in the United States.²²⁶ The operation itself entailed a coordinated strike on twenty-seven command and control stations with conventional and special operations forces.²²⁷ Furthermore, defensive actions were taken to ensure the safety of Americans in Panama and safety of the canal. Task Forces were used to target key PDF units, and finally, a mechanized infantry battalion was used to seize the Comandancia (the PDF headquarters).²²⁸ Overall, the operation consisted of just over four days of fighting, with most of it occurring the first day, and resulted in 314 PDF killed-in-action, 124 wounded, and over 5000 detained, while the U.S. suffered 19 killed.²²⁹

3. Analysis

Operation Just Cause was a success because all objectives were completed in an expeditious manner, in part due to the relationship President Bush enjoyed with the Intelligence Community. The relationship between the president and Intelligence Community contributed to the success of Operation Just Cause mainly in the planning process as well as with the DCI’s lack of a policy agenda. Antizzo noted that the IC was instrumental in correctly analyzing adversary actions to determine primary targets for attack upon the commencement of the operation.²³⁰ He also noted that American forces stationed in Panama prior to the start of hostilities were familiar with target sites and local infrastructure which aided in quickly accomplishing their objectives.²³¹ Throughout the planning process and implementation of the operation, DCI Webster remained

²²⁵ “December 20, 1989: Address to the Nation on Panama > George H.W. Bush Presidency > Presidential Speeches,” UVA Miller Center, accessed November 7, 2017, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/december-20-1989-address-nation-panama>.

²²⁶ “December 20, 1989: Address to the Nation on Panama.”

²²⁷ Taw, *Lessons for Operations Other than War*, 8.

²²⁸ Taw, *Lessons for Operations Other than War*, 7.

²²⁹ Taw, *Lessons for Operations Other than War*, 8; Cole, *Operation Just Cause*, 51–51.

²³⁰ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 54–55.

²³¹ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 55.

committed to providing information to the president, and not pursuing a specific course of action. As a result, Webster is often criticized as being a weak DCI with allegations that he was relegated to the sideline during important policy decisions, to which he replied, “the CIA has to maintain its objectivity, so that my access cannot be used to advocate particular policy issues. My role is to be sure that the intelligence implications of a policy decision are fully known.”²³²

Antizzo and Taw both faulted the IC in providing accurate, timely, tactical information—namely the whereabouts of Noriega—to battlefield commanders during the operation, largely due to interagency barriers.²³³ The information, however, was reaching the president and NSC so when the commanders had questions, the NSC could always provide answers.²³⁴ Although Bush relied heavily on the PDB as a method of communication with the IC, it was not a useful tool during hostilities in Panama. Bush’s National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft noted that the PDB was not designed for fast moving tactical situations. A good briefer, though, would supplement the PDB with the most current reporting on a fast moving situation, which worked to keep the president apprised of developments throughout Operation Just Cause.²³⁵

The final note about the impact of the relationship on the successful execution of Operation Just Cause focuses specifically on the absence of the DCI in persuading President Bush to act in Panama. Instead, Webster left the planning and execution of the military operations to the JCS, regional Combatant Commander, and SECDEF. As noted by Caw, the plans for invading Panama had been drafted by SOUTHCOM Commander, General Thurman and had been approved as a contingency operation by President Bush, SECDEF Cheney, and the CJCS General Powell.²³⁶ Following the death of Lieutenant

²³² Loch Johnson, “DCI Webster’s Legacy: The Judge’s Self-Assessment,” *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 5, no. 3, 288, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08850609108435183>.

²³³ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 54–55; Taw, *Lessons for Operations Other than War*, 17–18.

²³⁴ Cole, *Operation Just Cause*, 46.

²³⁵ Priess, *The President’s Book of Secrets*, 170.

²³⁶ Taw, *Lessons for Operations Other than War*, 6.

Paz, Joint Chiefs of Staff were the ones responsible for recommending the commencement of the invasion after reviewing the intelligence.²³⁷ This is significant because, unlike the failure at the Bay of Pigs, DCI Webster focused on strictly providing intelligence instead of providing only intelligence that supports a policy as Allen Dulles did under President Kennedy. In fact, although he had “more access to the president of the United States than any of the previous thirteen CIA directors,” he intentionally did not have a role in policy making because, as an intelligence professional, it was his job to remain objective.²³⁸ This demonstrates the significance of the DCI remaining neutral in policy decisions.

F. RELATIONSHIP MAINTENANCE

Unlike President Kennedy, President Bush enjoyed early intelligence and operational success with the ousting of General Noriega from Panama. As a result, whereas Kennedy had to completely overhaul his relationship with the IC, Bush merely had to maintain his already thriving relationship. He accomplished this by continuing the endeavors undertaken in his early presidency. He met with the DCI regularly, provided written comments and feedback on the PDB, and in general, cared about intelligence. After his time as DCI, Webster reflected on Bush and stated that as a former DCI, Bush cared about intelligence and wanted it directly from the agencies—not filtered through the White House staff as many of his predecessors preferred.²³⁹

The continued positive relationship ensured policymakers remained highly informed as Iraqi troops massed along the Kuwaiti border. Initial analysis indicated that it was merely an intimidation tactic, however, Central Intelligence Agency analysts reversed their assessment overnight on August 1, 1990 stating that Saddam would soon invade Kuwait.²⁴⁰ President Bush was informed of the change at 5:00 AM, but before Bush could call Saddam to talk him out of invading, Iraqi forces pushed across the

²³⁷ Cole, *Operation Just Cause*, 28–29.

²³⁸ Johnson, “DCI Webster’s Legacy,” 288.

²³⁹ Johnson, “DCI Webster’s Legacy,” 288.

²⁴⁰ Priess, *The President’s Book of Secrets*, 181.

Kuwaiti border, and thus began the planning and execution of Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield.

G. OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD AND DESERT STORM

Bush's continued positive relationship with the Intelligence Community again paid dividends in 1990–1991 when Saddam Hussein ordered the invasion and annexation of Kuwait. Because of his relationship, Bush was informed of and receptive to the assessment that Hussein's forces were about to invade Kuwait prior to its commencement. Additionally, the IC was instrumental in the planning process, identifying targets for the air command. DCI Webster's relationship with President Bush was also instrumental in the operation's success because unlike the military sources, the CIA's PDB more accurately assessed the destruction of Iraqi armor which was the primary criteria for the authorization of the ground war.

1. The Iraqi Invasion

Saddam Hussein chose to invade Kuwait for several reasons. First, Hussein felt as though he, and Iraq's army had defended the Arab world from Persian Shia fundamentalism coming out of Iran in the costly eight year Iran-Iraq War that concluded in 1988.²⁴¹ As a result, Hussein felt as though the other Arab nations should help with the cost of the war.²⁴² Second, Saddam long considered Kuwait to be a nineteenth province of Iraq. Saddam believed that the British carved Kuwait out of the Turkish province of Basra, and after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, it had been stripped from Iraq.²⁴³ The land dispute was settled in 1963 when the Baathist regime recognized Kuwait, but flared again in the late 80s with the discovery of the Rumalla oil fields.²⁴⁴ The border split the highly profitable oil fields, and Hussein accused the Kuwaitis of slant drilling to steal the oil from Iraq. As a result, Hussein demanded reparations from Kuwait and Kuwait

²⁴¹ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 180–181.

²⁴² Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 181.

²⁴³ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 65.

²⁴⁴ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 65.

refused to pay.²⁴⁵ Finally, Hussein felt as though had U.S. permission to invade Kuwait—or at least an assurance that the United States would not get involved. According to Brigham, at a July 25, 1990 meeting, Ambassador Glaspie allegedly told Saddam that the United States “has no opinion on the Arab–Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait.”²⁴⁶ Later in the same meeting, Glaspie did warn Saddam that the United States would not tolerate hostilities in the region, and that the United States was concerned with Saddam’s force build up on the Iraqi–Kuwaiti border.²⁴⁷ Saddam assured the ambassador that he understood the U.S. position, yet, he ordered his troops across the border a week later.²⁴⁸ On August 2, 1990, Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait, seizing the capital by early afternoon, and Iraq officially annexed Kuwait on August 8, 1990.²⁴⁹

2. Authorizing Desert Shield

Although the U.S. Intelligence Community predicted the invasion, the international community was shocked because it did not believe an Arab country would attack another Arab country. The invasion prompted the immediate passage of multiple UN resolutions to include: one that imposed sanctions on Iraq pending the withdrawal from Kuwait; the second, one that voided the recognition of the annexation of Kuwait; one that allowed for military action to enforce the embargo; most significantly, was the passage of a resolution that mandated the total withdrawal of Iraqi forces by January 15, 1991 or face international military action.²⁵⁰ The UN resolutions were important because they gave the U.S. time to build a coalition to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait as well as the authority to conduct action.

²⁴⁵ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 65.

²⁴⁶ Robert K. Brigham, *The United States and Iraq Since 1990: A Brief History with Documents* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013), 12.

²⁴⁷ Brigham, *The United States and Iraq Since 1990*, 12–13.

²⁴⁸ Brigham, *The United States and Iraq Since 1990*, 12–13.

²⁴⁹ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 66.

²⁵⁰ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 67.

Immediately following the fall of Kuwait, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell discussed the possibility of concentrating U.S. troops along the Saudi–Kuwaiti border with the Saudi Arabian ambassador. Using satellite imagery of the Iraqi military presence along the border, they persuaded the ambassador to allow the coalition forces to begin troop deployments in Saudi territory in an effort to shield Saudi Arabia from an Iraqi invasion.²⁵¹ Operation Desert Shield was the name given to that “massive build-up of U.S. forces in and around Saudi Arabia to protect it from Saddam’s Republican Guard now poised on the Saudi border.”²⁵²

During Operation Desert Shield, the Intelligence Community was vital in determining Iraqi troop strength and locations. The president was seeing those assessments daily in both the PDB and the National Intelligence Daily²⁵³ (NID); however, the assessments differed as the operations progressed, leading to strife between the various organizations within the IC and confusion among senior policymakers.²⁵⁴ During this period, DCI Webster was instrumental in reconciling differences in reporting and disputes between the agencies. President Bush trusted his DCI and when it came to commencing the ground war, relied heavily on the DCI and the PDB.

3. Defeating Saddam in Kuwait

The United Nations’ resolutions gave the Iraqi army until January 15, 1991 to withdraw from Iraq, but Saddam refused. As a result, Operation Desert Storm began with an executive order following a confirmation that the military was ready.²⁵⁵ On January 16, hostilities commenced with B-52 bombers targeting Iraqi air defense and command

²⁵¹ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 67–68.

²⁵² Brigham, *The United States and Iraq Since 1990*, 16.

²⁵³ Whereas the PDB was produced exclusively by the CIA with inputs from other sources, the National Intelligence Daily was a report compiled by representatives from various agencies in the IC. The NID was produced with the intent to contain less sensitive reporting so it could be distributed to a wider audience. Priess, *The President’s Book of Secrets*, 78–79, 183.

²⁵⁴ Priess, *The President’s Book of Secrets*, 183.

²⁵⁵ Brigham, *The United States and Iraq Since 1990*, 20.

and control.²⁵⁶ Because Iraq had very centralized control of its integrated air defense, within a few days of strikes, the Iraqi air defense was suppressed or destroyed.²⁵⁷ The air campaign then moved on to target Iraqi armor which was the aspect of the campaign in which the DCI's relationship with the president was most important as discussed in next section. On February 22, after over a month of aerial bombardment, President Bush gave Saddam one last chance to leave Kuwait.²⁵⁸ Saddam incorrectly assessed that his troops would be able to inflict substantial casualties in the early phases of the ground war which would sour the American public's view of the war, and withdraw support.²⁵⁹ Instead, the United States feigned an amphibious invasion to distract the most elite Iraqi units while the main force pushed North from Saudi Arabia. As a result, the coalition troops pushed Iraqi forces from Kuwait in a mere 100 hours.²⁶⁰

In the early phases of Desert Shield, Bush announced the goals of the operations. He stated that the U.S. wanted the following: the complete and immediate withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait; the reinstatement of the legitimate Kuwaiti government; protection of U.S. citizens in Kuwait and Iraq; and regional security and stability in the Middle East.²⁶¹ By the end of February 1991, and the quick defeat of Hussein's forces in Kuwait, the identified objectives of the operation had been successfully completed, demonstrating additional operational successes during Bush's presidency.

4. Role of the IC and its Relationship with the President

Reviews of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm highlighted severe intelligence failures at the tactical level, but the failures did not extend to the president and NSC. The official congressional report identified the IC as failing to understand the intelligence needs of battlefield commanders, failure to collect tactical level imagery, and

²⁵⁶ Brigham, *The United States and Iraq Since 1990*, 20.

²⁵⁷ Brigham 20–21.

²⁵⁸ Brigham, *The United States and Iraq Since 1990*, 23.

²⁵⁹ Brigham, *The United States and Iraq Since 1990*, 22–23

²⁶⁰ Brigham, *The United States and Iraq Since 1990*, 23–24

²⁶¹ Antizzo, *U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War Era*, 71.

failures in conducting Battle Damage Assessments regarding the destruction of Iraqi armor.²⁶² These intelligence failures did not contribute to an operational failure, however, in large part due to DCI Webster and President Bush's relationship. Priess explained, that the military reporting was predominantly based on pilot reporting whereas the CIA reporting was based on sensitive reconnaissance reporting.²⁶³ Based on first looks from high resolution satellite imagery and U-2 photos, the analysts for the PDB saw functional armor despite airstrikes. As a result, the PDB consistently reflected lower battle damage assessments than were being reported in the NID from the DOD sources because they were based predominantly on pilot post-mission reporting.²⁶⁴ This caused tensions to rise between DCI Webster and DOD entities, including U.S. Central Command Commander General Schwarzkopf and the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, who accused the CIA of a conspiracy to delay the ground war.²⁶⁵ As Bush did when he was DCI and having issues with Kissinger, Webster went to the president to discuss the issue. President Bush understood why the CIA reporting was different, equating the defense intelligence as faulty due to pilot euphoria, and made his decision based on Webster's reporting, demonstrating the significance of the relationship between the DCI and president in operational success.²⁶⁶

H. CONCLUSION

President Bush cultivated a positive relationship between the president and Intelligence Community both as DCI and as president. He used the same tactic for both: get the analyst in front of the president so the president can provide direct feedback to the analyst as well as bolster the morale of the analysts because they know their work is reaching the highest office in the United States and being used to make foreign policy

²⁶² U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services, *Intelligence Successes and Failures in Operations Desert Shield/Storm*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1993), 2–3, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a338886.pdf>.

²⁶³ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 183.

²⁶⁴ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 183–184.

²⁶⁵ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 184.

²⁶⁶ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 184.

decisions. Bush demonstrated the significance of communication—both through written feedback and vocalized from president to intelligence professional—in establishing a positive working relationship. Those lines of communication ensured the president received the most up-to-date, accurate information available during tactical operations, allowing him to make decisions that contributed to success in Operations Just Cause, Desert Shield, and Desert Storm.

Although operational and tactical level commanders criticized the Intelligence Community during Operations Just Cause, Desert Shield, and Desert Storm, tactical, operational, and strategic level intelligence reports were making it to the highest office. This temporarily slowed the pace of the operations, however, intelligence reporting to Bush allowed him to make decisions that ensured success, as demonstrated by the armor destruction reports marking the transition from Desert Shield to Desert Storm.

Bush's presidency answered questions posed by this thesis because Bush established a positive relationship with the Intelligence Community. The relationship was cultivated by encouraging open communications between his DCI, analysts, and himself. Furthermore, he was receptive to the information being provided. He also appointed a strong leader, devoid of political motivation, with a compatible personality as DCI. His positive relationship contributed to success in multiple major military operations.

V. COUNTERARGUMENT, FINDINGS, AND FURTHER STUDIES

A. INTRODUCTION

This thesis used case studies of Presidents George H.W. Bush and John F. Kennedy to demonstrate that the relationship between the president and Intelligence Community serves as a factor in the chance of an operation's success or failure. Furthermore, Kennedy demonstrated that a poor relationship can be remedied if the president is receptive to changes and disciplined in implementing the changes. This chapter will serve to address the argument that the relationship does not have an impact on success or failure by evaluating George W. Bush's presidency. It will then outline the key findings from the research and provide suggestions that will help future administrations and DNIs to form an effective working relationship. Finally, this chapter will suggest areas of further studies.

B. COUNTERARGUMENT

This thesis has shown a slight correlation between the president's relationship with the Intelligence Community, and the frequency of success or failures in his presidency. The good relationship Kennedy enjoyed following the appointment of DCI McCone, and George H.W. Bush²⁶⁷ enjoyed for the duration of his presidency, contributed to successes for both presidents. Following that argument, President George W. Bush should have only seen successes. Instead, he was in office for two enormous failures. This case, however, does not disprove the earlier findings because the intelligence had faults. The failure to find WMDs in Iraq, and thus the highly criticized invasion, occurred because the strong relationship allowed the faulty intelligence to be communicated to the president. Furthermore, because DCI Tenet was not appointed by President Bush, Tenet likely felt the need to provide the intelligence the president wanted in an effort to remain in his position.

²⁶⁷ For the duration of this chapter, the use of "President Bush" or "Bush" will be in relation to George W. Bush. Any reference to George H.W. Bush will be indicated with the full use of his name.

President George W. Bush entered his presidency with a great relationship with the IC, but he witnessed two massive failures in office: the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and the faulty analysis of Iraq's WMD program. The occurrence of these substantial failures in a period during which an effective relationship between the president and IC appears to disprove earlier correlations between status of relationship and chance of success, but instead, it emphasizes the importance of the information's accuracy even when a strong relationship exists. It also serves to show that, although relationships are a factor that can contribute to success or failures, the relationship is not the only reason for the occurrence of failures or successes.

George W. Bush's relationship with the Intelligence Community, like all presidents since Eisenhower, began when he was announced as the Republican nominee for the 2000 presidential election. The early interactions set the stage for a strong relationship upon entering office because George W. Bush was insistent on receiving regular briefings and was engaged in the briefings. According to Helgerson, Bush's first briefing took place on September 2, 2000. The briefing lasted over four hours, and the briefers noted that Bush was one of the most interactive customers they had the pleasure of briefing.²⁶⁸ To the IC, the length of the brief and Bush's receptivity to the information indicated the desire to form a strong relationship. While waiting for the election results to be adjudicated, Bush indicated his desire to form a strong relationship with the IC by stating, "I had great respect for the CIA in large part because of my father's admiration and respect for the CIA. Therefore, when I got elected president, my inclinations towards the CIA were very positive."²⁶⁹ Finally, according to Priess, some Agency officials have described George W. Bush's presidency as a golden age for the IC because he was "an active and engaged president who not only wanted an in-person intelligence briefing every working day but also started bringing his brier with him whenever he traveled."²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 151–153.

²⁶⁹ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 226.

²⁷⁰ Priess, *The President's Book of Secrets*, 224.

Based on these comments and early interactions, it is clear that Bush began his presidency with a strong relationship with the IC.

During the pre-election period, two points arose that should have raised concerns about the relationship with the Intelligence Community: first, Presidential candidate Bush and Vice President candidate Cheney made very specific allegations regarding Iraq's WMD program during debates, referencing inadequate intelligence.²⁷¹ Second, Bush, at times, asked for recommendations from his intelligence briefers that bordered on asking for input for policy decisions.²⁷² Those factors, coupled with DCI Tenet's personality, contributed to the inaccurate assessment of Iraq's WMD program that served as the basis for the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

President Bush's decision to keep George Tenet as DCI contributed to the inaccurate assessment of the Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction because as President Clinton's DCI, Tenet had previously demonstrated political tendencies and, to keep his job, Tenet provided intelligence to support the president's preconceived notions. Tenet's political tendencies were evident before Bush entered office. According to Helgerson, Tenet did not provide Bush's transition period briefs because he was in the Middle East negotiating a peace settlement between Israel and Palestine.²⁷³ This demonstrates that Tenet was amenable to supporting policy objectives, instead of focusing on solely providing unbiased information to aid the policymaker. Furthermore, Tenet was a holdover from Clinton's administration, and as a result, Tenet felt as though he was not a part of Bush's team, nor was he off it.²⁷⁴ Bush initially intended on replacing Tenet with Donald Rumsfeld, but instead named Rumsfeld as the Secretary of Defense. Bush chose to keep Tenet on indefinitely instead of replacing him because he did not have any other

²⁷¹ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 155.

²⁷² Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 155.

²⁷³ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 151.

²⁷⁴ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 170.

candidates in mind, and he felt as though keeping Clinton's DCI on would demonstrate that Bush wanted to keep politics out of intelligence.²⁷⁵ Tenet was clearly worried about keeping his job, noting that for a brief period following Bush's inauguration, Tenet made it a point not to attend every PDB briefing to avoid the appearance that he was advocating for his job.²⁷⁶ As a result, this likely left Tenet feeling as though he needed to find intelligence to support Bush's policy objectives instead of providing unbiased information so Bush could make the best decision. This contributed to the creation of a NIE based on single source inaccurate reporting.²⁷⁷ Furthermore, one of Tenet's division chiefs alleges that he told Tenet that the foreign intelligence service providing the reporting had known source management and reporting problems, but Tenet dismissed the chief.²⁷⁸ According to the report, these views were shared by many senior CIA leaders, but these doubts were never expressed to the administration—not because of ineffective communications, but because of a “serious failure of management and leadership.”²⁷⁹ This supports the notion that Tenet failed to report information counter to Bush's notion that Iraq was aggressively pursuing WMDs, but instead, provided information reinforcing the incorrect perception.

The reporting of single-source intelligence, code named “Curveball,” to the president in an effort to support President Bush's notion that Iraq was developing WMDs by a DCI with reservations about the accuracy of the information impacted the failure, and not the relationship. Had Bush appointed an unbiased DCI and developed the same relationship with that DCI as he had with Tenet, the decision to invade Iraq could have been averted. The relationship itself was instrumental in ensuring communications between the IC and president; however, the DCI, serving as the liaison, was more

²⁷⁵ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 170

²⁷⁶ Helgerson, *Getting to Know the Presidents*, 168.

²⁷⁷ Laurence H. Silberman and Charles S. Robb, *Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005), 105, <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/GPO-WMD/pdf/GPO-WMD.pdf>.

²⁷⁸ Silberman and Robb, *Commission on Intelligence Capabilities*, 105–106.

²⁷⁹ Silberman and Robb, *Commission on Intelligence Capabilities*, 105.

interested in keeping his job than accurately representing the IC. As a result, the failure was not because of the relationship but instead occurred because of the DCI's political nature.

The surprise attack on 9/11 does not disprove the importance of a good relationship between the IC and the president because the attack was not prevented due to a lack of collection and analysis instead of a lack of communication. This thesis contends that an effective relationship hinges on good communication and that communication will enable success and mitigate failure. In the case of 9/11, the intelligence was not available to communicate to the president or it likely would have been acted on. The 9/11 Commission Report found the IC responsible for failing to "connect the dots." Whether that happened due to a high level of noise with very few "signals," (as identified with hindsight bias) or due to a lack of tactical level intelligence to act upon as suggested by Dahl does not negate the fact that surprise attacks can occur, regardless of the effectiveness of the president's relationship with the IC. If the information is not available, it cannot be used to thwart potential failures, and as a result, does not disprove the previous findings regarding the impact of relationship on success.

C. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The president's relationship with the IC does have an impact on the chance of intelligence or operational failures or successes. Kennedy and George H.W. Bush both demonstrated that when a positive relationship existed between the president and the IC, president's witnessed more operational and intelligence success. That being said, the relationship is only a component of what contributes to success or failures. President George W. Bush had a phenomenal relationship with the IC yet the IC failed to predict the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and failed to accurately assess the status of Saddam Hussein's WMD program. Additionally, a failure can serve as a catalyst that spurs a change in the relationship, but does not mean that the relationship will change. President Kennedy demonstrated that a president that is receptive to change and willing to put in the work for a change, the relationship between the IC and president can be repaired and lead to success. President Clinton, on the other hand, did not. Following the failures in

Mogadishu, President Clinton only temporarily placed a higher importance on foreign intelligence. After a short period, intelligence fell off as a priority for Clinton which set the stage for additional failures, demonstrating that he was not receptive to change, despite the failures, resulting in continued failure.

This thesis has also identified three key findings and proposes accompanying recommendations. The first key finding of this study is that a poor relationship between the president and intelligence community will usually be reevaluated and often remedied following a major intelligence failure whereas good relationship will not necessarily suffer due to a massive intelligence failure. The second key finding is that trust and good communication must exist between the president and his DCI/DNI for a positive relationship to exist and for that trust and communication to exist, the president must appoint his own DCI/DNI following his inauguration. The IC must accept and follow the appointed leadership and the appointee must take to position with grace, faith, and trust in the community.

The president should appoint his own DNI shortly after taking office because access and trust are vital to national security and mitigating failures. The newly appointed DCI should be well accepted by the IC, but more importantly, should have access to the president. Under Kennedy, Dulles was a holdover from the Eisenhower administration, and as a result, was never fully trusted by the Kennedy administration, nor did Dulles have regular access to Kennedy. McCone, on the other hand, was Kennedy's appointee, had access to the president, and succeeded. The same was true with

Another key finding: the DNI should provide the support necessary for the president to make the most informed decision, but should not provide policy recommendations. DCI Dulles supported covert action in Cuba whereas DCI McCone provided imagery of missile sites, intelligence on missile capabilities, and intelligence support on naval activity in the Caribbean during the Cuban Missile Crisis; however, he did not provide policy recommendations on how President Kennedy should respond to the intelligence provided. Instead, the other principals and members of ExComm debated the strategies and implications to provide recommendations to President Kennedy, who ultimately made the decision to impose a quarantine while working back channels to

work out a diplomatic solution. The decision to invade Iraq, however, was an example of DCI Tenet supporting a policy with intelligence, instead of using intelligence to inform President Bush.

Another finding involves communication and receptivity. Upon being appointed or inaugurated, it is imperative that the DNI and president establish a method of communication, whether that be face-to-face or through a briefing process. It is up to the DNI to determine the needs of the president and how he would like to receive information and ensure the IC is providing the intelligence in that manner. Kennedy was not receiving intelligence in a useful manner at the beginning of his presidency, and that contributed to the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion. George H.W. Bush, and Kennedy in the second half of his presidency, in contrast, was receiving intelligence in a useful manner which contributed to success.

D. FURTHER RESEARCH

Because this thesis was limited to only examining a few presidents, research should be expanded to analyze more presidents and DCI/DNI combinations. The United States is on its 45 president, each of whom have made countless decisions regarding the safety and security of the United States, but this thesis focused predominantly on just three presidents and six events. In depth analysis of all post-World War II presidential relationships with the IC and how the relationship impacted all operations and reactions to world events would expand the dataset and allow for a more complete analysis of the relationship's impacts.

Additionally, a study comparing and contrasting the DCI and DNI should be conducted to analyze the efficacy of the newly created position. The DNI position has been considered a necessity off and on since the 1970s. As time commences, a comparison between how the DNI interacts with the NSC and IC as a whole would illuminate if the creation of the position has had a positive or negative impact on the frequency of intelligence failures.

This study focused only on U.S. operations and the relationship between the president and U.S. intelligence community. Additional studies evaluating foreign

governmental leaders and their respective intelligence communities during failures and successes could also be conducted to provide insight into what does and does not work for various types of government.

Finally, a study evaluating the impacts of elevating the DNI to a Cabinet-level position should be evaluated. Based on this thesis, one could assume that doing so would improve access to the president; however, Reagan and Clinton both witnessed substantial failures with the DCI in a cabinet level position. Trump is the first president to raise his DNI as a Cabinet level official. The evaluation of how this impacts the relationship, access to the president, and influence among the other cabinet positions could also help mitigate future failures.

E. FINAL COMMENTS

Although the relationship between the IC and the president has been determined to have an impact the chance of failures and successes that occur during a presidency, it is not the only factor that contributes to intelligence failures. Furthermore, the implementation of the above recommendations will not guarantee that failures will not occur on a president's watch. Instead, this thesis merely identified what is sometimes a contributing factor to intelligence failures and suggested possible corrective actions.

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